137 areas, the wild olive, wäyra, is preferred, because it is
313 available, a hardwood, yet not difficult to split. Ease of splitting is always a most important consideration because of the population's simple tools and disinclination to expend effort to change what nature provides. Another olive, the wanza (Cordia abyssinica, a coarsely porous light wood), is popular for smoking out beer jars and other pottery before and after use. The yellow, cherry-like olive is one of the available wild fruit trees.

On lower levels of plateau elevation, the acacia known as grar is found in many varieties, often as the "umbrella tree". Generally the wood is hard, used in construction, and even more popular as fuel, especially as charcoal for firing pottery. Lowland trees include the termite-resistant Natal yellow pine, the giant sycamore, mimosa(also called grar), gum trees, lemon, and a small size banana.

137 One of the most popular trees, especially in the larger
824 centers of population on the plateau, was imported by Em-
197 peror Menelik II about half a century ago: the odoriferous, water-holding eucalyptus, called bahēr zaf (lit. the tree from overseas). Although there are no real forests of it, it is the most noticeable tree in Ethiopia, planted around houses, in wooded clumps between urban sections, towering above the native plateau trees. It grows so fast that in some areas it can be "harvested", primarily for construction purposes, after only five years.

137 A common sight on lower slopes is the euphorbia, qul-
278 qwal, which resembles an immense, spiny chandelier with
824 multiple branches. Its milky sap is used in some native

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

PART II: Utilization of Natures Products by the Amhara

177 183 Part I established the basis for examination of the culture of the Amhara of Abyssinia and Ethiopia, and the elements included in the long blending process which created Amhara culture. The original, native, Cushitic-speaking culture patterns were based on the geographical milieu, influenced by topographical and climatic conditions of the highlands. On these were superimposed several ancient cultural influences from abroad. The Amhara thus appears as a "semiticized Hamite".

The results of this blending of autochthonous African culture traits and Mediterranean-Asian traits are apparent in both their material and non-material culture. Much survives in Amhara culture of the ancient South Arabian culture pattern: agricultural patterns, occupational divisions, dress, written language, customs and beliefs. Finally, the [184] cultural configuration which had long been the privilege of the Amhara ruling class has in recent historical times become shared by all Amhara; and, still more recently, due to imitation, prestige, conquests, etc, by ever-increasing numbers of the original, formerly Cushitic-speaking sections of the indigenous population.

123 While Part I was concerned largely with dimensions of Time and Space, Parts II and III will be more concerned with 181 the dimension and the use of Energy. In both material and non-material culture the Amhara pattern has remained, at first glance, strikingly "early medieval." Ingenuity with regard to material culture has gone into the utilization of the products of nature, including farming and animal hus-

perhaps replacing obsidian blades. They are now in turn being replaced by European safety razor blades even on remote rural big markets. These are called "lesa melaḳ" although very commonly still sold by an Arab trader. The small glass drinking bottle called "berellē", used in place of a cup for mead, has been brought by caravans from the Middle East since the Ottoman Turkish period. The European drinking glass, "berčheqo" is still rare in rural areas.

F. Clothing

There is a substratum of wearing skins in all of Ethiopia, sheepskin particularly and even leopard skin. Among the Amhara this appears among poor wandering church students, and in the fact that certain textile articles, notably the "lämd", symbolize the leopard skin of the warrior which he still wore at the time of the accession of the present emperor. This type of clothing is in the African tradition.

But the clothing of the Amhara today is largely of cotton, plus a wool cape for the feudal "great men" or landowning farmer. Both have come to Abyssinia from the Middle East areas: the long shirt, "qämis" probably came during the 19th century, together with the white Indian jodphurs (that some trace as late as Lord Napier's campaign); the wool burnus is believed to have entered as long ago as the 5th century A.D., together with Coptic Christianity.[66]

66. Mohrer, E.F.: Beiträge zur Kenntnis der materiellen Kultur der Amhara. Bern, 1932, p. 19.

271 skirted, one-piece, and in rural areas of coarse, heavy cotton cloth made by the weaver (shammani); while the "ejtebab" of men is of imported cotton sheeting (abujedid) of fine quality. Jodphurs (surri) are of heavier, but also imported cotton. The Coptic priests in rural areas also wear a type of "qämïs" resembling that of women, but without embroidery, and much more wide-sleeved, thus called "ejsäri".

291 177 In very recent times city women of the younger generation in Addis Ababa have compromised with modernity by wearing a "qämïs" of light, imported, white rayon, thus bringing the development full circle. It is, however, still ankle-length, and the upper part of the body still covered in addition by a light version of the traditional shamma. Even modern-educated husbands who, as clerks or teachers wear European suits themselves, insist on their wives wearing some type of "qämïs" plus shamma. Male wearing of the wide-cuffed European trousers ("bolalé") has taken hold only in Addis Ababa and among modern-educated clerks and teachers. The nobility takes pride in resisting and in wearing jodphurs; and rural teachers still imitate them rather than modernity (much as they teach that the world is round without believing it themselves.).

291 The jodphurs, wide at the waist, are held by a cloth belt, "tebtab". This narrow belt of heavy cotton is used also for other trousers, and for the belt around the "qämïs" [843] of women. Pregnant women wear a long cotton girdle, 6 inches wide, beneath the qämïs, ("mäqännät"), for support, and use it also at night or during the rainy season, for warmth.

286 the expensive, woolen, hand-made "kabe", among the common priesthood.

291 Headdress, except for the cap("qob") of monks and nuns, and the turban of priests, is not worn by the Amhara. Only in the cold upper "dega" do the shepherd make a kind of helmet of reeds or plaited wool, covering the ears. The first breach came about a generation ago when some of the [17] nobility began to wear European hats of soft felt, with wide brims. More recently, the tropical helmet of British and Italians has become popular among educated clerks, teachers and provincial judges, and even commoners of distinction are beginning to weave an imitation tropical helmet of reeds, to serve as a miniature, personal sun umbrella. But the vast majority still use no headgear, and protect themselves from the hot sun by wrapping a portion of the shamma around the skull. The shamma thus provides protection from cold, heat, dust, rain--and shields the bashful (see language of shamma).

Most Amhara still go barefoot. Sandals used to be the prerogative of royalty, and though this prohibition no longer exists, leather sandals, or rubber sneakers from Egypt are still only in limited use, mainly in towns. Shoes imported from Europe are expensive and are worn only by highly educated individuals, officials in Addis Ababa, etc. The average Amhara, including some rural nobility, prefers to continue barefoot. Rural nobles even ride barefoot using the traditional stirrup with an iron ring for the big toes. Sandals made of leather were used by travellers. They

437 If bettered in trade, he will try to even the score, both in his heart and before his peers, with veiled insults within hearing of the other party, such as "my mother was not a pottery-maker", alluding to the low-class origin of the seller who has charged too high a price.

Housewives shopping at the market are conscious of "nuisance value". Before going home, if it is early, they loiter at the stall of the Arab merchant toying with the displayed merchandise while he nervously watches, until he gives them little gifts so that they go away, "ayn hamalasha" (lit. turning the eye away, i.e. homeward). The young women receive this with glee at having outwitted the shrewd Arab, and dance away.

When two Amhara have concluded an agreement, they touch each other's outstretched palms while standing very close to each other, and, in the presence of witnesses, swear "Haile Selassye yemut" (lit. may the emperor die, i.e. if the swearer breaks his agreement). This procedure is not followed in little transactions, but in the case of major livestock, because of the family and other social significance.

443 177 The Saturday market in a long-settled town ("qedamye gebaya") has long been the entrance gate for diffusion of foreign goods, ideas, and ethnic groups. The Muslim mosque is usually very close, even at the edge, its minaret overshadowing the market. The teahouses, "shay bet" are of longtime, Arab introduction, usually operated by Ethiopian Muslims who import the tea and know how to prepare Arab delicacies. It is patronized by Arab whole-

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

443 177 salers, and other Muslim retailers. Here they discuss caravan trade, import and export, and local business. These Arabs speak enough Amharic for their purposes, but cannot read or write it, so that they employ temporary services of Amhara clerks, graduates or upper classmen of elementary schools, to translate and write documents relating to transactions, taxes and loans. It is these Arab traders who constitute most of the customers of provincial branches of the new State Bank of Ethiopia. Only rarely does a foreign company like Besse have a local branch, operated by East Indian managers. This is recent, while the Arab traders are the successors of former Arab slavetraders, an ancient but now abolished occupation in Ethiopia. Arab traders also serve as personal bankers to Amhara.

The broker, "mäden", may be an Amhara. This is especially true if he is the aforementioned labor broker. He acts as negotiator for business transactions, and (e.g. in the sale of major livestock) personally guarantees that the object sold was not stolen; he is required to make good the loss if it is not so. This is an important form of insurance, for which the broker may charge as little as 1%, payable usually in cash; he is also given a barley beer dinner after the transaction. He, in turn, may employ Amhara loiterers to gather around during transactions and contribute their wit to urge the buyer to close the deal.

563 143 554 The Muslim Ethiopian retailer, unlike the Arab trader, carries little prestige among Amhara. His com-

693 and thus not a contender for the throne. He was the chief justice, for he could hear appeals even from the highest court in the land, and act as arbitrator and judge in high-level quarrels between feudal lords and even involving the king himself. His role as chief counselor of the king has now been taken by the "Tsahafi" (lit. scribe), who has risen to that position from that of long-time private secretary, at present Wolda-Giyorgis.

692 The present High Court has original and appellate jurisdiction over all cases in Ethiopia, criminal as well as civil. Majority opinion of the judges prevails. In 1942 a Supreme Imperial Court was appointed to hear appeals from the High Court, but it convenes only intermittently. A secret Crown Court is called together in special treason cases affecting the old nobility, or the officers of the new army.

671 177 A new Civil Law Code is still being worked out, by a series of European jurists invited for that purpose. Meanwhile new decrees are published intermittently in the official "Negarit Gazeta" (lit. the drum gazette), in both Amharic and English. The Attorney-General is a foreigner (for some time Mr. Nathan Marein), but the Minister of Justice, the Legislative Consultative Committee and the President of the High Court are Ethiopians, with a range of modern education from very little to average.

642 The Constitution of 1931, further liberalized in 1955, was a free-will gift of the Emperor. It established a Parliament of two houses, the upper directly appointed,

293 story. Later ones imitate European crowns.
778 In parades tall crosses of bright metal are carried, Like most Abyssinian priestly hand crosses, they are so ornamented with further cross designs that they appear to the Abyssinian as "perforated"; hence the common expression "perforated as the cross" (where a Westerner would use the symbol of the sieve). Priests and monks always carry a handcross, which they hold out to a passing acquaintance to kiss, theproper greeting toward clergy, even on ordinary days. Smaller crosses are [789] used by the public as amulets against evil spirits. The larger crosses, with their ornamental supports, forming perforated circles and squares, sometimes contain engra- [325] ved verses. The method of casting is the"cire perdue", which is also used to cast the concave tops of the "ma- [534] qomya" crutch. In front of old churches, resonant stones are suspended from poles, and when struck, act as bells to summon for the service.

778 Other metal church utensils include the censers in which incense is burned during the services, swung by the officiating priest. They may be of brass, silver, iron, even clay in poorer churches. They are often equipped with numerous small bells. Very common is [534] the sistrum, called "sänassel" (onomatopoetic), a rattle instrument reminscent of ancient Egypt, usually of brass, 8 inches long, with a straight wooden handle, the metal frame cast in "cire perdue", often by Falasha smiths. The frame is perforated like a cross. The tinkling disks, [177] which glide along the cross-wire between the sides of the frame

201 675 196 Symbolism in commerce serves to give legal validity to a trade agreement, since bystanders thus become witnesses. When buyer and seller agree, the right hands are waved up and down, which attracts attention, then palm touches on palm (with fingers stretched away). This may or may not be reinforced by the verbal oath "Hayle Selassye yemut" (May the emperor die, if I lie). This commercial symbolism is followed especially in important transactions, such as livestock.

201 196 Symbolism in political life takes the form of rythmic handclapping, ("anchchäṭächchäba"), not to be confused with Western applause. It is performed as a greeting, as acknowledgement of superordination. It does not follow public proclamation. These are greeted with respectful silence, but women may indicate actual or pretended joy with their joyshout "ellel". Amhara public opinion ("astäyayät") sometimes signals negative reaction to official proclamations by "murmuring" in a delayed stage-whisper, and though officialdom traditionally pretends to ignore public opinion, it usually employs paid listeners who mix with the public to trace any "murmuring" to its sources. For, in the past, ignored murmurings frequently led to rebellions.

Anger, whether silent or accompanying verbal battles, is signalled by wide opening of the eyes ("afättäta"), or a furious, intent stare ("täfattäta").

201 Directional signs are made by moving eyelids and eyelashes, particularly by nobles or persons imitating their subtle ways. To communicate "get rid of this person", I want to talk to you alone", the eyelids wink up and down ("taqqäsa"); to signal "come out of the hut, I want to talk to you outside", the pupils and eyelashes work in the direction of the door. Men may give such signals as frequently as women.

201 177 The signal of expressing desire to enter consists of knocking with the entire fist ("korräkkoma" - onomatopoetic). Finger-knocking

201 [77] 521

has been introduced only since the Italian occupation.

The gesture indicating sour-bitter taste (which are not differentiated; and collectively called "märara"), consists of slowly shaking the head sideways ("tängäshäggäshä"); sometimes reinforced by the verbal exclamation of pain, "ayye" or "nayy!".

516 Postures differentiate between the status of the master and that of the servant. The master indicates his "free" status by sitting way back on the stool or bench, straight, in a position which would require special effort to rise and therefore emphasizes that he does not expect to have to jump up at anyone's command. A servant may not sit in presence of the master, or must sit lightly so as to be ready to perform any duty for which he may be called upon at any moment. To indicate respect, a servant carries out his duties on the run (as "on the double" in the Western armies), while the master is present.

The correct posture in sitting is called "kurkum alä", sitting "folded up"; the legs bent at the knees, the feet far back and partly hidden, since it is "rude" to sit with legs stretched out beyond the knee. But the thighs may be spread, especially when seated on a mat on the ground, even in the case of peasant women who wear the ankle-length, heavy cotton gown. To sit with legs crossed (Turkish fashion) is frowned upon as the posture of "barya", the Muslim or "pagan" ex-slaves from the Sudan; considered a rude and lazy position by the Amhara. The proper posture of the Amhara, if seated on the ground, is a squatting position, on the hips, never on the heels; feet flat on the ground, knees high and spread, the toga arranged so as to cover the knees and shins even when jodphurs are worn.

201 554 Facial expression of a high-status Amhara (noble, priest, elder) assumes a stoic appearance. The jaw muscles are relaxed, the mandible slightly dropped, the eyes half-closed but alert, breathing very quiet,

[195] the voice in even tone (in contrast to the strident whine of the argumentative peasant-gabbar).

533 To European ears the music of the Amhara sounds like a continuous cacophony, like the tuning up of a Western orchestra. But once accommodated to it, the sentiments expressed in the high-pitched chanting, the ecstatic pitch of emotions of the priests and däbtära, is recognized, when they sing for hours the chants they know so well by heart.

One foreign musicologist characterizes the timbre of voice in some Abyssinian chants as "harsh, forced and strident, unlike the singing in Negro Africa which is usually soft and rounded" (footnote 96). But he appreciates the artistry by which boy singers change the register, dropping from the usual falsetto to chest voice, and octave below, then move back into the falsetto; also, the interesting polyphonic technique, in which the second voice sings the melody introduced by the first voice, in the same pitch, but with delayed entry, so that a "canon" or "round" results, which is abandoned toward the end, the two voices ending in unison. Thirds seem to be preferred, though fourths and fifths occur among the voices.

Dabtara are always at work experimenting with minor alterations, which may in time accumulate. Furthermore, certain regional specializations exist: Arabic music affects Abyssinian music wherever Muslims live in sizeable numbers, especially in Tigre province, and near the Sudanese border. Here the wailing Arabic chant that breaks off abruptly, has infiltrated.

533 178 Modern, national Ethiopian music dates only to the 1920's. It includes the modern national anthem and other patriotic songs such as "lion of Judah". The music, often composed on order, by foreigners or

Footnote 96 - George Herzog, quoted by Leslau: Chansons Harari. Rassegna di Studi Etiopici VI, p. 161, Rome 1947.

275 548 Even a prostitute would be ashamed to engage in one-night affairs, to engage in sexual activities coldly without at least some minimal affect. She is paid for her services after consumption, or tries to take the man's money while he is asleep, but will not aggressively demand advance payment. Therefore, customers who may develop an interest in the same waitress-prostitute, not rarely fight for her affection, temporary though it is. No prostitute would take more than one man in one night, not only because this would be very shameful, but also her competitors would beat her for such unethical behavior. In the past the "täj byet" was publicly advertised by a red cross painted on the outside wall. During the Italian occupation, protests of the International Red Cross caused removal of this sign, but one still encounters it in remoter areas.

273 [77] The use of an even stronger drink, "aräqi" (arrak), the only distilled drink among traditional beverages, is very likely of Arab introduction; It is on the increase in towns because of exposure to strong European liquor during the Italian occupation, but is not made or consumed in the rural hamlets, not even on feasts. In the towns it is made, usually to fill specific orders, by the wives of soldiers or policemen, to add to the meager income of the husbands, whose salary of Eth$20 - 25 is lower than that of the unskilled laborer (Eth$30 - par month). It is produced from "enselal" caraway seeds, gesho (leaf f[illegible] fermentation), semi-fermented barley ("beccel") and dagussa grain, ... of which are crushed, mixed with water, dagussa plant is added, and the fermented mixture is boiled for 10 hours, distilled through a bamboo reed. The finished product is carried, in a European glass bottle, to the customer directly, e.g. the owner of the "täj byet", and is consumed, because of the higher price, by semi-educated clerks and officials with good salaries, or travelling traders or army or

273 police officers. The visiting peasants, who have just sold the harvest, stick to mead, which, for their taste, is alcoholic enough and expensive enough.

The person who pays for a round of drinks is loudly lauded as "elephant", king of African animals. The "tāj byet" is usually the gayest place in town, well-lit, open until very late at night, equipped with nimble waitresses who, contrary to the usual pattern of female behavior, lightly flirt with the customers, in a semi-childish (therefore subordinate) way.

273 177 In recent years, exposure to European alcoholic beverages in the cities had led to attempts to replace thehoney used in "taj" with cheaper sugar, and to add other ingredients to raise the alcoholic content. This is done in many mead-houses in Addis Ababa, but is rejected by the traditional conoisseur, especially in provincial towns like Gondar. Even in the city this is regarded as dangerous, for no one knows just what the experimenter may have added. One common police case is the adding of gasoline to city barley-beer or mead, which competitors sometimes have placed into the competitor's brew so as to ruin her business. An early effect of the exposure to European alcoholic beverages was reported humorously in the 1920's, when the private brewer of the powerful provincial lord Ras Hailu of Gojjam attempted to champagnize the traditional mead (footnote 99).

276 Consumption of tobacco ("tembaho"), which is called "drinking tobacco" if smoked, is still regarded as forbidden by the Abyssinian Coptic clergy, and is therefore rare among Amhara, except for those modern-educated individuals who have been abroad. The latter smoke cigarettes turned out by Ethiopian government monopoly in Addis Ababa.

Footnote 99 - Griaule, M.: D'un Mode Aberrant de Conservation de l'Hydromel au Godjam. Journal de la Societe des Africanistes, IV, Fasc 2, pp. 278-284, Paris, 1934.

186 quoted to praise farming as the best and most typical Amhara occupation, casually refer to the Muslim as a person not bound by social ethics:

[539] "He traded - (then he) cheated;
he was appointed (official) - he began (to act) like a Muslim;
(but) he (who) was a farmer - and became a king!"

[177] Nevertheless, the influence of Islam, probably by slow diffusion, has been considerable on Abyssinian Christianity through the centuries. Their avoidance of "unclean, forbidden things" ("erm"), such as pork, though officially based on the Old Testament prohibitions, was probably reawakened or reintroduced and emphasized through the pressure of Muslim ideas, geographically so close.

[532] The Amhara paint an infidel, like any evil person, with one eye, in profile, for "he has only half a soul, is only half-born, sees only half the truth." The outsider is regarded as automatically of evil personality.

C. Amhara Ideas about Body and Personality.

826 Not all Amhara ideas about human beauty are dominated by racial criteria. A long, lean face ("fit s̈älkakka") is considered handsome in a man, while a broad face ("fit m̄eda") is considered ugly; this may bear some relation to the gerontomorphic preference over the pedamorphic.

[304] A long neck ("ang̈at") is a mark of beauty, in both sexes, but noted especially in the woman who therefore may have a series of necklaces tattooed on to her neck. The beauty of the long neck is referred to in the following proverb:

[539] "The neck of the dead child
is longer (than ever);
(meaning, "a good thing that came when of no use).

The forehead is considered the location of good fortune, and a large forehead is considered a mark of beauty in men.

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

PART VI: HEALING BODY AND SPIRIT

753 177 The "living museum" aspect of Abyssinian culture is perhaps nowhere so evident as in Abyssinian medicine. Both basic concepts and practical functions recall much that has been derived with little change (though much culture loss) from ancient Egypt, the ancient Near East, ancient Greek culture, plus regional ecological developments in Abyssinia itself.

753 756 Many ailments are regarded by the Amhara as closely interwoven in the body and spirit of the patient, and in fact, frequently no sharp distinction is made between bodily and spiritual ailments; so that the same illness may sometimes be treated by the surgeon-herbologist ("woggesha"), and if not successfully cured, by the practitioner of exorcising magic, the "däbtära" scribe; or the practitioner of sympathetic magic, of the "zar" cult; or even the sorcerer, the "täqqway". Only the latter is considered illegal. However, a fairly clear distinction is made between organic ailments and functional ailments, and on the basis of whichever preliminary diagnosis is made, it is decided which practitioner to call in first.

756 The association of the däbtära with the church has increased his activities in recent years from that of amulet-writer and herbologist to many of the functions of outright magic, particularly since the tanqway has become illegal. The dabtara always seems to have enj the highest respectability and trust of any of the practitioners, for, as in ancient Greece, his activity in the official religion is believed to extend over the ills of the body and over the world of the spirits.

753 There is no philosophical basis for the development of medical systems among the Amhara, no reasoned system. Their medical concepts are pre-Galen, at most Aristotelian. The dabtara have, or, in some cases claim

794 776 781 177 771 Yet despite this hierarchy of spirits, in the static construct of the zar cosmology, the factor of syncretism dominates the dynamic functions. As a result, a Coptic woman possessed by a Muslim zar may wear the colorful print head shawl of the Muslim woman; and even a Falasha woman, living in a semi-isolated Falasha hamlet, may suddenly refuse to shave her head (which is required of wives by Falasha religious law) and will braid it in the fashion of a Coptic Amhara woman without serious ostracism by her kinfolk which would be her punishment otherwise. At the wadaja ceremony, like the one at the convention, Coptic women and doctors chant hymns modelled after Muslim worship, refer to the zar as "prophet", and use Arabic loanwords, to flatter and cajole a Christian zar.

794 776 771 Finally, religious syncretism in the zar cult is often intertwined with Christian cosmology and hagiology. Thus, Zar Sayd-Qadr, of Muslim origin, has become synonymous with Jesus Christ; The legendary Amhara Christian saint Gäbrä Mänfäs Qeddus is believed to have been an ally and advisor of the powerful Zar Säyfu Chängär. The archangels Mikael and Gabriel, who are given feasts on tazkar memorials for Coptic Christian departed souls, are regarded in the zar cult as "commander of the right house" and "commander of the left house" of zars (patterned on the human, tradional Abyssinian army). The Christian zar Abba Yosef if believed to join other Copts in bathing in the river to celebrate Temqät (Epiphany). Christian zar spirits remain dormant during the lenten season.

[798] In view of this, it is perhaps not too surprising that the Coptic Church of Abyssinia remains passive, in effect tolerant by default, toward the zar cult and its social institution.

X794 171 The same observer reports that the silver baton of the former Sultan of Aussa in this area was regarded as a magical object, enshrined, and confided to envoys on special missions. (Note Ber Alanga on zar list of Amhara).

X794 177 171 Diffusion of the zar cult from these areas to neighboring lands is the general consensus of most scholars who have occupied themselves with the problem. This would center the origin of the zar cult in Ethiopia. The name itself was noted among the Islamized Somali by Cerulli:

W48

> "As a remainder of paganism may be regarded the ceremony of the zar, perhaps an ancient sacred dance. Natives crown in a circle and the chorus begins to sing on a special rytha. One or many among the singers fall fainting away to the ground. The others "beat the zar" by singing and striking the hands or clattering with the feet or striking drums or kettle drums. Then the person who has fainted rises little by little from the ground, takes in his hands a dagger, and dances in the circle with the dagger drawn out, til he falls again in a faint; but immediately rises fully recovered, The zar is danced also with a burning brand instead of the dagger; among the Sab the dancer goes out of the circle, runs in the jungle nearby and then comes back showing with loud cries his dagger sprinkled with blood of the genius he has killed..." 113

X794 171 Diffusion of the zar cult into the Sudan from Abyssinia is concluded by Trimmingham in his recent book "Islam in the Sudan".

114 What seems to be a form of the zar cult was observed among the Swahili of coastal East Africa, where it was called "Ngoma ya Pepo", according to Skene. 114

In predominantly Islamic areas, it seems that the zar is classified as an evil spirit, similar to the jinn. This is the how orthodox Muslims are enjoined to regard all pre-Islamic "pagan" deities, according to the Quran, (Sura 37, verse 158).

113. Cerulli: Somali, Encyclop. of Islam 1908, p. 487
114. Skene: Arab and Swahili Dances. Journal of the Royal Anthrop. Instit., 1917, pp. 420-434.

buda out of him: seating the patient in ashes - the natural abode of the buda - to entice the evil spirit to leave through the anus. The latter is regarded as the preferred pathway of the buda - the opposite principle of the soul which is believed to leave through the head. Sometimes the tänqway orders that the person accused of buda sorcery be brought before him and made to spit upon the patient, which breaks the spell if he has actually cast it. Since 1942 the government has branded the "täñqway" as a fraud. As a result, the business of the still respectable däbtära and also the woggesha has increased in treating cases of buda.

C. Evil-Spirit Disease ("ganyän") and the diviner ("täñqway")

While the aforementioned täñqway is, or used to be, called in occasionally to exorcise a buda, his major specialties are the exorcising of "ganyän" evil spirits who have a very different character, and the divining of lost or stolen goods.

Of all spirit doctors, the täñqway occupies the lowest social position. He is "uneducated" for he uses no books and in fact is almost always illiterate. His methods are nearly identical with those of African "witch-doctors" and include such methods as throwing of bones and animal parts, for divining.

The major principle of both the täñqway diviner and the ganyän spirits he specialized in, seem to be regional; the activity one of geographical orientation. For the ganyän, considered inferior to zar and buda spirits in power, are localized, evil genies. The term itself is etymologically related to the Arabic "djinn", local evil genies, though actually derived from the Geez "janyen"), and the concept is also similar: most ganyen are either water-spirits or fire-spirits.

TTC It is therefore likely that the ganyēn idea was brought to the
● 177 Abyssinian highlands from Southern Arabia about 500 B.C., superimposed on the earlier "buda" and "zar" beliefs, but reduced to the bottom scale of the spirit world with the coming of Coptic Christianity in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D.[122]

TTC The ganyēn are considered by the Amhara wholly evil. In personality they are choleric, male quickly aroused to aggressive rage. They are believed to be of dark complexion. They are so tough "they can eat stones". They attack men far more often than women and in daylight rather than at night, (exact opposite of the zar). They cause neither hysteria nor apathy, rather they cause their victim to run amok.

682 As a result, the legal significance of the ganyēn possession
754 in Amhara society is considerable. Almost every apprehended murderer claims that the ganyen "pushed his hand". He thus "was not himself". In the old tradition, if evidence for actual ganyen possession was deemed sufficient, the excuse brough sufficient mitigation so that the kin of the murdered individual could accept blood-money from the murderer and his kin without a blood-feud and without losing prestige. In such a case, the priest-confessor or "mānfās gubaē", acting as intermediary, would go to the bereaved kin and beg forgiveness for the crime. If they agreed, the "danya" (judge) would set the "semanya", (the amount of blood-money); formerly a minimum of 80 Maria-Theresa Thalers (now Eth$1000 = US $4000).[1/λ] It is noteworthy that this tradition is so strong that even the modern Ethiopian court in Addis Ababa often sets the damages for

122. See MacDonald, D.B.: "Djinn", (in) Encyclopedia of Islam, pp. 1044-1046, and Trimmingham: Islam in Ethiopia, p. 260.

1/λ [valuation given here is not in agreement with that given elsewhere — probably should read "US $4460)."-Analyst]

177
755

5. Summary of the däbtära's syncretism in healing the spirit.

It is clear from the above that a number of ancient spirit cosmologies have contributed to, and survived in, Amhara healing practices: Ancient Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew, Arab, Christian, and African. In fact, the syncretism has been so complex, for so many centuries, that it would be impossible to trace all the roots, with any degree of valid certainty. However, several traces do stand out and their etiology bears significantly on present function.

The book "Lefafa Tsedeq" of the Coptic Abyssinian Church (lit. Book of Righteous Life, in Geez), contains spells and formulae attributed to Jesus Christ and Mary, but actually showing influences from the Egyptian "Book of the Dead". Its function among the Amhara is entirely in the context of funerals and funeral mass during memorial services.

764

Much of the Greek-Byzantine influence may have entered directly at the time Abyssinia was christianized; but more came via Arabic, later. This includes patches of Greek mythology, legends in connection with the New Testament, and traces of the astrological work of claudius Ptolemy (about 150 A.D. in origin), known in the West as Almagest". 123

Hebrew influence is most commonly encountered with reference to the mystic powers of King Solomon, who occupies about the same role in Amhara spirit cosmology as in Jewish mythology (Kabala). Amhara amulets refer, e.g. to the "fishnet of Solomon", in wich he could catch demons as readily as a fisherman catches fish in the rainy season. The powers of archangels, e.g. Fanuël, Gabriël, etc., are very similar to Jewish cabalistic ideas, 124

123. See Strelcyn, S: Un magicien grec en Ethiopie. Journal Asiatique, 1951, p. 175-192
124. Walker, John: Folk Medicines in Modern Egypt. London 1934.

177 The "seal of Solomon" (actually the 6-pointed star of David) often
755 appears on Amhara amulets (e.g. against Karina). Even Hebrew-
789 appearing characters are found on amulets (a widespread custom in the Middle East.) [125] As might be expected, Hebrew traits are even more emphasized among the Falashas, who begin every amulet with: "Blessed be the God of Isreel, God of all Creatures; prayer against.....".

Arabic influence has served primarily as a carrier. Directly derived from the Arabs are the 12 signs of the Zodiac, found on Abyssinian amulets. Carried was the "seal of Alexander".

Christian mythology and hagiology predominates in the cosmology of the amulets of the dabtara. Many of them begin with the formula: "In the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, one Divinity; prayer against.....". Deniers of Christ who are suspected as sorcerers, are often personified in these amulets as Falasha or Barya. Christian martyrs and saints, Abyssinian or "from Jerusalem", are appealed to for intercession against demons. The following are frequently encountered in amulets:

776 Abuna (bishop) Batra Maryam, Abyssinian saint, against snakebite (pro-
177 phylactic); St. George, "Geidus Giyorgis", shown spearing a monster
755 (an old idea possibly dating to the Bel-Marduk battle among ancient Babylonians, and Ra and Horus in ancient Egypt).

St. Sebastian is often depicted in drawings, and appealed to against the Kagana and other threshhold demons. To keep out disease and evil, this amulet is often placed above the entrance to a hut; but not in the doorway itself, if someone inside is already sick, for this would block the exit of the demon.

[751]

125. Reich, Sigismund: Quatre Coups Magiques. Bulletin d'Etudes Orientales, Vol. 7-8, pp. 159-175. Institut Francais de Damas, 1937-8.

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

•177
T76

Gäbrä Mänfäs Qeddus (lit. Saint Servant-of-Soul), an Amhara saint from the province of Shoa, who was a saint from birth, and who, instead of dying the usual way, entered heaven in bodily shape.

Täklä Haymanot, the foremost Abyssinian saint, and an actual historical figure. An Amhara bishop from Shoa province, he lived in the 13th century and founded the still existing monaster of Dabra Libanos. He too is regarded as a saint from birth. His sacred spring at the monastery is regarded as powerful holy water, and those who cannot make the pilgrimage, as far as Addis Ababa (about 150 kilometers away), have water brought in Chianti bottles. The bones of important persons are sometimes unearthed and sent to rest under cave ledges at this monaster. Many austeritiss, miracles, conversions of heathens, and even temporary conversion of the devil himself are ascribed to him. On church paintings and amulets, Haymanot is depicted with one leg missing, lost during a martyrdom, but with wings which protected him from falling down the steep mountains of Abyssinia.

Tewodros (St. Theodor), regarded as the founder of the Abyssinian monastery of Dabra Maryam. But the name is also used as a synonym for another Messiah, who, according to a 14th century Abyssinian book "Feqqärä Iyasus" (lit. Love of Jesus) will some day come from the east, conquer the world, usher in a long period of peace and prosperity, preceding the final catastrophy. (Probably with this tradition in mind, the usurper Kassa had himself crowned Emperor Theodore, in 1855).

Jesus Christ himself is regarded as a powerful magician, more powerful than the powerful magicians Moses and Solomon, over animate as well as inanimate matter. The curative spells used by Jesus are

177 [776] contained in the aforementioned book "Lefafa Tsedeq".

African cosmology underlies much of this syncretism. Some is probably old-Cushitic, antedating the Geez-speakers. Some evidently has been carried into Ethiopia by the Galla. Caravan routes and the slave trade have long maintained contact with Central Africa, and some amulets resemble the "grisgris" of West Africa. 126

756 [177] The dabtara thus has many tools and sources for his trade. He can use the books of the church, in Geez which he alone understands; saints, angels and martyrs; translated Arabic myths - including many of Graeco-Christian origin; cabalistic Hebrew cosmology; he can call on the mystical elements of nature: fire, water, earth, and air, without knowing that ancient system.

No wonder that some dabtara specialize and work out syncretic systems of their own. The more esoteric the source and the manner and atmosphere of writing, the more admiration and faith does it call forth. Some dabtara secretly cooperate with zar doctor colleagues. Some develop rituals of their own, such as writing amulets only on specified days of the week. Some go so far in their syncretism as to invite (secretly of course) a non-Copt, such as a Muslim or a Falasha, to write certain texts for him, on the amulets; or the interfaith colleagues exchange their handiwork! For the efficacy of the esoteric is regarded as double. Amulet-writers of the three faiths are curious about each other's magical powers, and while the ordinary individual will shun and fear such "comparative religion", the doctors feel protected sufficiently to risk such "free enterprise" contact.

126. See Lifschyz: Amulettes Ethiopiennes. Minotaur, Vol. 2, 1934, p. 71-73

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

171/754 Amhara, and evil witchcraft feared by the geographically close Nilotic Azande. This is not surprising, since contact with the "Barya" people of the Nilotic Sudan is well known. In Azande society, persons who are "socially undesirable" are suspected of sorcery, but never the nobles and the rich.[130] Among the Amhara, too, [554] no "telleq sew" (great man, noble, rich) is likely to be accused as a "buda" sorcerer, while socially low-class groups doing the despised work of ironsmithing are immediately suspected when a "buda" case arises. In both societies, Azande and Amhara, such suspicion leads to prompt interrogation of the suspect, and revenge by the kinfolk of the victim. In this type of magic, social significance, i.e. ethnic relations in Amhara territory, is considerable.

●177/755 Amhara healing of the spirit is psychological, in the first place of significance. In the second place of significance is the enormous syncretism, among linguistic, ethnic, religious and racial components of the art of healing. It presents one of the few outlets for "free enterprise" available in the Amhara tradition. It is this cultural syncretism over the centuries, which, despite the political isolation of Abyssinia, has maintained and developed the spirited character of the Amhara peasant.

130. Evans-Pritchard, E.E.: Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande. London 1937.

2: Allen G-5 (1941) 1943 MP5 Amhara MP5

133 could see the forests blazing on the flanks of Belaia from the bombs dropped by the Savoias in their unsuccessful attempts to search out the Emperor's camp.

The wooded flanks of the Western Escarpment of the Ethiopian plateau overlook the plains of the Sudan. The top of the Escarpment is 4000–5000 feet above sea-level, and the gap opposite Mambuk village which we climbed is about 2900 feet above the level of the Shankalla plain, which rises steadily in a series of low rocky corrugations all the way from the Dinder river some 100 miles to the west. From the top of the Escarpment the fertile plains of Gojjam stretch for another 100 miles to the canyon of the Blue Nile. There is a fall of about 5000 feet to the great ravine with its subtropical vegetation from the dusty upland round Debra Markos. From the western edge of the Blue Nile Scarp it is a whole day's march down to the river for loaded animals, and more than a day's march up the eastern bank on to the Salale plateau at Shafartak.

The Ethiopian Highland is a series of plateaux separated by deep canyons such as that of the Blue Nile. The eastern edge of the Highland is the western edge of the great African rift. There is a parallel rift from lake Tana along the canyon of the Blue Nile to the Southern Lakes of Ethiopia and it is continued through the East African lake system down to lake Tanganyika. A series of north–south and east–west faults divide up the Ethiopian highland into separated plateaux. The Awash valley, running west–east, and really connecting the north–south rifting with the Red Sea basin, flows in the most notable of these. The different plateaux are sometimes connected by narrow necks of land or panhandles: for instance the neck connecting the plateau of Debra Zebit with that of Debra Tabor is hardly more than 100 yards across with a sheer drop south-west to the ravine of the Bashilo and north to that of the Gash or Takkaze.

133 These peculiar geographical conditions explain much in Ethiopian history.
177 The great line of the Escarpment, overlooking the Red Sea depression on the
648 east and the Sudan plains to the west, has protected the population of the uplands from penetration by foreign armies until modern times. The only successful conquest of Ethiopia was that of Muhammad Gran, the "left-handed," a Somali chieftain who is reputed to have had an Ethiopian father. The Somali-Arab armies which were really the spearhead of Turkish imperialism on the Red Sea in the great days of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century, penetrated the Ethiopian Highland by the Awash valley in a series of campaigns which lasted for about half a century. In the end the great altitudes and the inclement rainy seasons probably restored their independence to the Ethiopians. In general, it may be said that the Highlanders have never been able to conquer and hold the hot lowlands of the Red Sea and the Arabs and Somalis have never been able to maintain themselves on the upland plateau. Only in the subtropical region of the southern lakes as far as the Dadessa valley and Jimma has there been any important penetration of Islamic influences.

133 Foreign influences, Semitic and that peculiar early Ethiopian or Eritrean
177 civilization known as Aksumite, have come in from the north over the easier

2: Allen G-5 (1941) 1943 MP5 Amhara MP5

grade from the Eritrean plateau. All civilization in Ethiopia has penetrated from north to south along the great dorsal ridge of the Eastern Escarpment, where the so-called Strada Imperiale now runs from Asmara to Addis Ababa.

Along this line have been concentrated the successive Ethiopian capitals with the exception of Gondar, which was chosen far to the north-west as a refuge from the ruinous wars with the Moslems and the Gallas. And along this line, due south from Aksum and Aduwa, were the great centres of the Copto-Ethiopian culture of the Middle Ages, places like Lalibala and the monasteries on lake Haik and the traditional centre of the Coptic Church at Debra Libanos.

From this dorsal ridge of the Eastern Escarpment Ethiopian culture, and it was a very real culture in its heyday, spread westward into Gojjam and southward to the region of the lakes. Luca di Sabelli in his recent 'Storia di Abissinia' has shown that Coptic-Ethiopian missionaries were active as far south as Madagascar and the Mozambique coast.

Ethiopian Coptic culture drew its nurture from the powerful Coptic Church in Cairo, from the Crusading civilization in Palestine, and from the Byzantine Empire. Just as the establishment of the Turks at the exit from the Black Sea brought about the decline of the East Christian cultures in the Caucasus and the Balkans, so the Turkish control of the Nile valley and the Red Sea slowly strangled the Coptic Ethiopian culture of East Africa. The Ethiopian rulers, pressed by the invasions of Muhammad Gran, were well aware of their mortal danger and it is a curious fact that kings in Georgia and Ethiopia appealed to the rising power of Spain in the Western Mediterranean at about the same time. The Portuguese episode in Ethiopia was a delayed response to the appeal made to the Catholic powers.

The extraordinary tenacity of the Ethiopians to the western tradition is a remarkable characteristic of their historical development. The Aksumite kingdom, for all its Semitic appearance, was essentially a projection of Hellenism, and the Aksumite kings remained the traditional allies of the Byzantine Emperors in their struggle with the Persian Sasanids for the control of the Red Sea—an episode which was parallel in time with the conflict between these same two "world powers" for mastery of the Black Sea. The Coptic Church and Christian civilization in East Africa proved more enduring than the once powerful Nestorian Church in Asia, with which it may in some ways be compared. The later Ethiopian Kingdom played the same role in the struggle between Turks and Portuguese for control of the Red Sea and for the trade of the Indian Ocean as the Aksumites had a thousand years earlier in the rivalry between Byzantines and Persians. But they showed the same persistent antagonism to the Roman Church as the East Christians had displayed towards the Crusaders and the Papacy. In the end the Ethiopians expelled the Portuguese from Abyssinia and managed to maintain their own independence against their Moslem neighbours, until in the last decade it was suppressed by a professedly Christian power.

The Ethiopians are a remarkable phenomenon in the East African world and with their tenacity and their undoubted natural intelligence they are destined to have no little influence on the future course of history in that area.

2: Allen G-5 (1941) 1943 MP5 Amhara MP5
Tulama MP25

A 177

In terms of historical probability it should be emphasized that at many periods during the millennium before the Christian era Jewish influences waxed strong in the interior of Arabia and along the eastern coast of the Red Sea. There was regular intercourse between the two coasts of the Red Sea and the Aksumite kingdom on the borders of Eritrea, and the Ethiopian Highland emerged as a city-state similar in character to the city-states along the Arabian coast, and in culture more than half Semitic.

600

To the north of the Syrian area the tradition of descent from the House of Solomon grew up in the royal houses of Armenia and Georgia, after the conversion of those two countries to the Christian faith. At the same time there were very ancient colonies of Jews in Georgia and Dagistan which may well have dated back to the period of the Babylonian conquest of Israel. A later spread of Jewish influences and even of Jewish elements which may be checked historically from the works of Arab geographers took place in the ninth century A.D. among the Khazars—a Turki people who had founded a state in the northern Caucasus and along the Volga.

A 174

A similar spread of Jewish influences to the Ethiopian Highland in an earlier epoch is historically no more improbable and, in terms of geography, would have been a much easier process. The fact that the present-day Falashas are Agau-speaking indicates that the Jewish infiltration, if it took place, was at a period when Agau was generally spoken on the Ethiopian Highland.

A 563 T 105

The Gallas.—The origin of the Gallas is another of the curious mysteries of African history and the Gallas themselves remain the most significant problem of the inner politics of Ethiopia. They first appeared in Ethiopia towards the end of the sixteenth century. The country had been depopulated by the long Somali wars and by the following conflict between Catholic and Coptic Orthodox arising out of the Portuguese intervention.

During the next two centuries the Gallas swarmed over all the countryside of Ethiopia. They settled in the region of the southern lakes, which at an earlier date had been colonized by the Ethiopian Kings. They reached the Escarpment overlooking the Awash valley and the neighbourhood of Harar on the borders of the Somali country. Like the Amhara they seemed to prefer the Highland and they spread over Shoa up to the canyon of the Blue Nile and north along the ridge of the Eastern Escarpment into Amhara.

In Shoa, the Imperial province of Ethiopia, people speaking Galla represent about half the population; and over Ethiopia as a whole they probably outnumber all the other racial groups.

In the eighteenth century Galla troops proved the decisive factor in the dynastic wars which covered the period of the final disintegration of the mediaeval Empire. Galla chieftains lorded it at the decadent court of Gondar; they made and unmade Emperors and married their daughters to them. But coming as invaders, the Gallas settled as peasants. In contrast with the indolent Amhara squireens, the Gallas are industrious farmers and labourers.

At the same time the Gallas had, and have, little political consciousness or racial coherence. When, in the course of the nineteenth century, Ethiopian

3: Buxton Y-5 (1946-1948)1949 MP5 Amhara MP5

of running water, and appeal to such *Dei ex machina* as marine action and waves of tranalation, cannot see a few such marks of the handiwork of rain and rivers as are shown by these gorges. There is not the slightest possibility, as far as I can see, of explaining their origin by any other force than that of the streams flowing in them. Any faulting or dislocation of the rocks is out of the question, there is no evidence of glacier action at any past time, and even the most fervent apostle of marine denudation would scarcely credit it with the formation of a Titanic trench three-quarters of a mile deep and very little more in breadth."

This description would apply equally to the gorges found in other parts of the Ethiopian highlands, for they are all, as far as I have seen, remarkably similar; and no geologist would now question their formation by stream erosion.

The formations of Blanford's area were called by him the Magdala group of "Traps"—an enormously thick, practically horizontal layer of lava flows. They were especially characterized by bands of trachyte, often columnar, weathering to form steep scarps. These formations are probably of late- or post-Cretaceous age, since Blanford's Ashangi Traps (upon which the Magdala group lies unconformably) were tentatively attributed by him to the Upper Cretaceous. Referring to the Magdala Traps Blanford says: "It is highly probable that the Trap rocks of Shoa belong, in part at least, to this group", his belief being based on some descriptions of Rocher d'Hericourt, who travelled in Shoa in the 1840's. My own limited observations confirm this assumption, except that in our area the most conspicuous cliffs and scarps consisted of columnar basalt, not trachyte. The area shown on the map consists of alternating harder and softer layers of volcanic rocks, including basalts, trachytes and tuffs (the latter often used, as in Kenya, for building). They dip slightly to the north-west.

The plateau, which occupies most of the sheet, lies everywhere above 9000 feet. It enjoys a temperate climate, and frosts are not uncommon in December and January. It is swept by easterly winds throughout the year, except when rain is actually threatened or falling, when it commonly turns right round to the west—a frequent occurrence during the long rainy season (June to September). The volcanic rocks have given rise to deep and potentially very fertile soils. The high plateau is mostly short grassland with very little bush, except in places protected both from wind and grazing animals, and very few trees except for small clumps of introduced Eucalyptus which mark almost every inhabited place. Owing to the scarcity of timber a dung-fuel known as *kubat* is usually burnt. At first sight the plateau appears very thinly populated but this, as will be shown, is an illusion. Anything like a village is rare, but isolated homesteads occur almost everywhere on rising ground. Nearly all this country makes good grazing for cattle, sheep and goats, and it is high enough for horses to flourish. Perhaps a third of it is more or less cultivable, though the area under cultivation in any one year is much less. Owing to cold and exposure very few crops flourish on the plateau itself, the principal ones being barley and broad beans.

The natural flora of the high plateau is not rich, though in rocky, sheltered spots a succession of attractive herbs and shrubs, including Jasmine, a yellow

3: Buxton Y-5 (1946-1948)1949 MP5 Amhara MP5

Ababa and Debra Berhan remains Galla country. The Amharas have re-occupied the region immediately around Debra Berhan, their southern limit corresponding roughly with the edge of the sheet; but the churches built to meet their needs (including the new St. Gabriel already once mentioned) are comparatively few and far between, a confirmation of the recent date of the re-colonization.

The Gallas remained in possession of the plateau country until the early nineteenth century when Sahele Selassie, king of Shoa, began to push them back. The half-dozen hill-top forts shown on the sheet almost certainly date from this time, or were reoccupied then. The capital of Shoa since the eighteenth century had been Ankober, on the edge of the great eastern escarpment, some 20 miles east of Debra Berhan. But Sahele Selassie, as part of his anti-Galla campaign founded, in about 1830, a new capital at Angolala in the midst of Galla country. He thereafter divided his time between Angolala and Ankober. A largely disused track, still well-defined in most parts, is shown crossing the sheet from Angolala in an easterly direction; this was evidently an old route joining the two capitals. Harris,[1] who conducted a British Mission to Sahele Selassie in 1841–42, visited Angolala which then contained four or five hundred huts. He also describes Sahele Selassie's two-storied "palace," built by an Albanian[2] visitor, standing on an eminence—which however the king would not inhabit, from fear of earthquakes. Angolala continued to be used by Sahele Selassie's son, king Haile Malakot, and the great Menelik, who was Haile Malakot's son, had been born here in 1843—just after the time of Harris's visit.

Not much remains now to show that Angolala was so recently the twin capital of Shoa; but the site of Sahele Salassie's house, an artificial mound crowning the ridge, is easily identified and commands a fine view of the countryside. Inside the mound is a vaulted cellar, its masonry showing clear signs of European workmanship, as also does the central stone-built element of the local church of Kidane Meheret. This work is now exposed to view as the church was burnt down during the Italian occupation. Angolala remains a well-populated area, but only a very few huts now stand among the remains of defensive walls near the old royal residence.

The young Menelik, up to the age of twelve, must have known all this country well. But at that time (1855) the newly crowned emperor Theodore, whose ambition was the unification of Ethiopia after a century and a half of anarchy and internal strife, came down from the north with the object of subjecting Shoa to his personal rule. He defeated king Haile Malakot on the plains of Atakilt, the irrigated area just south-east of Debra Berhan. Haile Malakot died immediately after the battle, and Menelik was carried away captive by Theodore—who, however, afterwards treated him as a son rather than a prisoner. For some years Menelik followed in the emperor's train, moving with him from Gondar to Debra Tabor and then to the hill-fortress of Magdala, Theodore's last capital and later the scene of his undoing. Several years before Napier's siege of 1868 Menelik had escaped from Magdala during, it is said, one of Theodore's periodic orgies. A youth in

[1] Harris, 'The Highlands of Aethiopia,' London, 1844.
[2] It is much more likely that Harris meant an Armenian.

3: Buxton Y-5 (1946-1948)1949 MP5 Amhara MP5

241 variety) and linseed is grown in most parts of it. Where more shelter exists lentils and chick-pea are also planted, and another low-growing leguminous crop called *gwayo*, which is used only as a cattle fodder as it is believed to [824] cause softening of the bones in man! The barley is planted early and the other crops late in the main rainy season (June–September). Barley is sometimes also planted in the early rains, which are very uncertain here but usually begin in February or March. In this area however the early crop rarely gives a good return and sometimes fails completely. The plateau land, after being cultivated for a few years (often until it shows obvious signs of exhaustion), is fallowed for a period which varies widely according to the type of soil, but may be as long as five or seven years.

Down in the gorges, where the climate is appreciably milder, and where a primitive sort of irrigation can be practised on the level shelves, both chick-pea and lentils flourish. Some *teff* (a grass-like cereal greatly favoured for making the local bread) can be grown, as well as wheat and barley. Shelf cultivation seems as a rule to be continuous, perhaps because of the fresh sediment spread annually over the fields by rain and irrigation. In the lower parts of the gorges some maize and millet (*Sorghum*) can be found, but almost the whole of the area included on the map is too high for these crops. Other gorge products, unknown on the plateau, are tomatoes, chillies, coffee and *gesho*—a shrub whose leaves are used for fermenting the local beer (*talla*) and honey-wine (*tej*). Bananas, for no obvious reason, are not grown, but are brought to Debra Berhan market from the low country beyond the eastern escarpment.

The agricultural methods of the Ethiopians are far more advanced than those of any surrounding territory and do not belong to Africa. They can be paralleled among the west-Asian peasantry, and a close comparison with the methods of the Yemen mountain people might be especially fruitful. It was from this latter region that the Ethiopians' ancestors emigrated, before the [177] Christian era, and it is extremely probable that they brought with them both implements and a knowledge of techniques. Hence perhaps the use of the plough, universal among highland Ethiopians, and their skill in irrigation and terracing.

[462] Farming in Ethiopia is primarily the man's and not the woman's work, [283] the standard female occupation, apart from household cares, being spinning. (Cotton is widely grown in the lowlands.) The farmers spend most of their [231] lives at the plough, a one-handled variety drawn by a yoke of oxen. In their right hand they carry a whip with a short handle and long, heavy thong which they continually whirl and crack above the heads of the oxen, to whom, at the same time, they address an endless succession of strange howls and shouts, curses and imprecations. New or long-fallowed grassland is broken in with the plough in the dry season. This complicated process (known as *gai*) involves first scratching the ground in several directions to dislodge the turf, next gathering the sods into numerous heaps, then setting fire to these so that grass and weeds are gradually burnt out, and finally spreading out the soil again. But the great time for ploughing comes after the main rains have reduced the countryside to a sea of soft, dark mud. At this season the fields are peppered with ploughmen. Each successive sowing must be prepared

7: Perham S-4 (no date)1948
MP5 Amhara MP5

lived in passing and upon which he could levy purveyance. His passage was an affair of pomp, in which important ladies had to be considered and a retinue taken, which might swell to many hundreds of soldiers and servants with all their families, slaves, and transport animals. Such journeys were veritable expeditions, not to be undertaken lightly. A journey right across the country might take several weeks, and in parts the rains made travel laborious or impossible for some five months of the year. The difficulty of communication gave the governor an independence of which he made full use. Governors of ancient divisions with a tradition of autonomy and governors from the royal family were generally allowed to rule with little interference. In this century the main provincial capitals were connected with Addis Ababa by telephone and this, with aeroplanes, which were just beginning to come into use before 1935, were the first threats to the isolation of the governors, which has since, in most parts, been so greatly diminished by the Italian roads. The Emperor had his agents who kept a watch upon governors and reported upon their doings; this kind of espionage was a highly developed system in Ethiopia. The governors on their side kept representatives in the capital. But this did nothing to overcome what several observers have remarked as the besetting sin of Ethiopian administration, the refusal to take any constructive responsibility. Governors of the old school were mainly concerned with the conservation of their own power, the collection of their tribute, and the fulfilment of their military duties. It would have been quite outside their range of thought to initiate new ideas of reform or to put down time-honoured abuses. Some of the governors spent much of their time at Addis Ababa and their deputies tended to be even more conservative in their use of authority than their masters.

Although the emphasis here is upon administration, it must not be forgotten that the governor was historically and in Ethiopian eyes primarily a high military officer and his civil duties were no more than the necessary accompaniment of his command. He had—as was shown anew in 1935—to raise and lead his provincial army in war. Some description has, however, already been given of the army, and there will be no need to discuss it further in this chapter except in the next section in relation to land tenure.

THE VILLAGE CHIEF

We have seen that by 1935 it was rare for a great local landed potentate to hold the highest provincial office; in most instances this was held by the Emperor's nominees. But this was not the only link the Emperor

7: Perham S-4 (no date)1948
MP5 Amhara MP5

427 paying the tribute for these *gabars*. (This method was also very common in Ethiopia proper.) There might also be forms of métayer contract. It need hardly be said that, after very long tenure, a tenant would try to claim that his land was *resti*, and that, with the growing shortage of land, numerous disputes resulted.

427 One of the main interests of Dr. Nadel's valuable analysis of Eritrean land tenure is that it shows the Ethiopian system as it was after half a century of Italian rule and as it is now under a British administration. The Italians swept away the upper parts of the structure except in so far as they allowed favoured chiefs to hold their old large estates, but at a lower level the system has been little changed. British administrators—who, of course, must act with the restraint of temporary caretakers—found their main problems arising from the intense, indeed passionate, competition for the inadequate amount of land which leads to numerous and long-drawn-out disputes. The Eritreans are proud of their land law, but to the European observer the lack of finality in their disputes and the great difficulty of obtaining any implementation of the decisions either of arbitrators or of native courts are great obstacles to the proper development of the land. But the difficulties with regard to tenure are, in all probability, much wider than legal questions and arise from the strain which the changing use of land is putting upon all customary African tenures.

423 Another most interesting conclusion drawn by Dr. Nadel is that the stubborn pride and conservatism of the *restenyas*, who cling to all their privileges with a fierce tenacity, represent a social evil. He speaks of the narrow exclusiveness of the system and its rigid political and economic privileges. 'It excludes large sections of the population permanently from a share in the administration of their own communities and keeps them in a state of dependence and economic insecurity. . . . To-day we are facing not merely the economic system of *resti* but a *resti* mentality.'[1] If this is true of that part of Ethiopia where both migrations and Italian policy have weakened this system, it is likely that in northern Ethiopia the problem is presented in even more rigid and difficult terms. But this, again, is only one illustration of the widespread African problem of harmonizing the existing tenurial rights of the original land-holders with the interests of the population as a whole.

[1] *Ibid.*, no. 2, p. 108.

[pp. 293 ff. not processed]

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

The Abyssinian calendar for *their* current year (leap year for them) accordingly compares with ours as shewn on the previous page; and in the last month given, the calendar resumes its normal correspondence with ours as, owing to the occurrence of our leap year, February has an extra day in 1936.

Apart from their language, there are many customs and practices amongst the Abyssinians which differentiate them sharply from most of the other peoples of Africa, and not the least interesting of these are clearly traceable to their ancient connection with Israel, of which they speak with pride in their old records.

For example, much of their religious pageantry, which is described in detail elsewhere, is undoubtedly a remarkable survival of rites which must have been introduced by the earliest Jewish arrivals, such as the Dance of the Priests, their ceremonies connected with the Tabot, and many others. Similarly, their method of slaughtering cattle for food, the division of animals into clean and unclean, etc., are all indications pointing in the same direction.

Their dislike of Jews to-day is accordingly the more remarkable, and must be due to the sanguinary wars which took place from the fourth to the tenth centuries between the newly-converted Christians and those who remained Jews.

Among other customs which are peculiar and interesting, pride of place must surely be given to their fondness for raw meat or *broundo*. This form of diet is preferred to any other by the mass of the population, and indeed by practically all sections thereof, beef being liked better than mutton.

When we were on trek our men could be given no

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

tent secluded and when they go out they ride mules astride, are completely veiled or rather covered up in their *chammas* and are accompanied by an escort on foot, one or two of whom walk or trot by the side of the mule holding the lady in position.

Getting on to the mule is an operation that must by no means be witnessed by the profane masculine eye; I remember on the occasion of the first visit paid to my wife by an Abyssinian lady of rank I went to the entrance to speed the parting guest. To my surprise a number of members of the escort took off their *chammas* and held them all round the mule so that their mistress could climb into her saddle in complete seclusion.

But rigid as may be the rules of privacy governing the lives of women, there are no harems, and no guard of eunuchs to watch over them as in Moslem countries.

Nevertheless other Eastern customs are practised, such as circumcision among men and a mild form of clitoridectomy among women; this custom, be it observed, is not as is often supposed of Jewish origin, but probably of much more remote antiquity, and is further evidence of the Hamitic descent of the Abyssinians; according to Gibbon circumcision had been practised "by the most ancient Ethiopians, from motives of health and cleanliness" and presumably not therefore as a religious rite.

The nation as a whole has not adopted European dress, although it is worn to some extent in Addis Ababa, and by individuals who have been to Europe. They are proud of their national dress and the Emperor still encourages its use at court functions and receptions at the palace.

The distinctive feature of the dress is the *chamma*,

175 Ucciali. A wave of patriotism swept the country and armies were gathered to meet the Italian invasion. On March 1, the Italians were practically annihilated by a vastly superior Ethiopian Army.

●177 Ethiopia had been put on the map. Menelik was interested in getting foreign help in a number of technical fields, and among the many technical experts traveling in the country during the next twenty years there were also a goodly number of physicians. The different diplomatic missions in the new capital, Addis Ababa, often had their own physicians and with Russian assistance the Emperor founded the first small hospital in the capital. Among the medical writers of this period were Chabaneix (1901), the well-known British medical historian, Charles Singer (1905), who traveled through southwestern Ethiopia to Addis Ababa in 1904, and the French Railway physician, Doreau (1909).

797 Mission societies sent medical missionaries to Ethiopia during the following years,
743 and French and Greek physicians, particularly, settled more and more in the capital and in Dire-Dawa, the French railroad town on the Addis-Ababa-Jibuti line. The French Government opened a hospital in Harar and the Italian Government at first kept a clinic in Addis Ababa which, in the early thirties, was enlarged to "The Italian Hospital." Ras Tafari, who had governed as a regent, with Menelik's widow, Zauditu, as Empress, was crowned Emperor in 1930, under the name Haile Selassie I. During his reign Ethiopia slowly has been emerging as a modern state. He early realized that the health of his people was of vital importance for the future of the country. In 1924, he founded the Beit Saida Hospital, which he entrusted to the Swed-

10: Barkhuis D-5 (1944-1945) 1947
MP5 Amhara MP5

Syphilitic papulae of the face and the axilla.

tion of this disease from the dark continent by Leo Africanus as early as 1515. It is not known how early syphilis appeared in East Africa, but there is every reason to believe that it has been there for centuries. Due to the apparent mildness of clinical cases and the lack of neuro-syphilis, it has been suggested, among others, by Naegelsbach (1926), that there is a relation between this "exotic" syphilis and the "bejel" from Arabia described by Hudson.

It is most likely that syphilis was brought [177] to Ethiopia by the Portuguese in the middle of the 16th century. Most of the early travelers had noticed its presence. Thus, Rochet d'Hericourt (1841) states that: "Although there are no prostitutes in Shoa, the venereal diseases are common, but not in a very malignant form." Blanc (1869) gives an interesting description of syphilis in the northern highland. Ninety percent

[D. 7:48]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5
Ethiopia MP1
Tigre MN9

related to Ge'ez, the ancient and liturgical language of Ethiopia, much as Italian is related to Latin.[1] It was in Tigre country that, during the first seven centuries A.D., the kingdom of Aksum reached heights of civilization never again attained in Ethiopia's history. Because of the antiquity of their region and the glory of their past, the Tigre are to some extent the cultural aristocrats of Ethiopia.

The Amhara inhabit vast areas of what are today the provinces of Bagemder, Gojjam, Wallo, and Shoa. Their language, Amharic, is the official language of Ethiopia.* Since the beginning of what is called the restored Solomonid Dynasty (1270), all but one of the emperors of Ethiopia have been Amhara.† The exception was a Tigre, Emperor Yohännes IV (1872–89), though he sojourned for many years at Dabra Tābor in Amhara country, and Amharic was commonly spoken at his court.

The differences between Amhara and Tigre culture have not yet been studied systematically. Even so, one can say that their differences are not nearly so great as what the two groups have in common. Language forms the chief difference. Like Ge'ez and Tigrinya, Amharic is a Semitic language, ultimately descended from old South Arabic, but Amharic has been molded to a greater degree by indigenous Cushitic tongues. Other differences relate to minor variations in custom, greater communal orientation in some Tigre areas, and differences in temperament. But the two groups share the legacy of Aksum, the Ethiopic alphabet, Ge'ez literature, Monophysite Christianity, similar political and social institutions, and the same style of life. One would be justified in treating their traditional Abyssinian culture as a unity, as virtually all authors have done in the past.

In this book, however, I have chosen to focus on Amhara culture as the dominant tradition in Ethiopia. This has been done, first of all, because of my limited competence to deal with Tigre materials, since I am neither familiar with Tigrinya nor fortunate enough to have done field work in Tigre areas. But a less fortuitous reason is that any serious account of contemporary Ethiopia must begin with the fact of Amhara dominance. With respect to numbers, true, the Amhara are in a minority: Amhara probably comprise no more than one-quarter of Ethiopia's total population (now estimated at around twenty-two million). Their dominance is to be measured, rather, in political and cultural terms. On the political side it is manifest in the perpetuation of the Amhara monarchy and the preponderance of Amhara in top political offices. On the cultural side it appears in the spread of Amhara customs throughout the empire by officials, soldiers, settlers, and teachers, and in

---

* English is the second official language.

† A number of Amhara emperors since the mid-eighteenth century were partly of Galla stock, however.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5
Ethiopia MP1

the continuous Amharization of the peoples of the empire through the required use of Amharic in schools and government offices and through the substitution of Amharic names for indigenous place-names in many parts of the country. If the national institutions and culture of Ethiopia are essentially Abyssinian, more particularly they are Amhara.[2]

The domination of Ethiopian national life by the Amhara, and the related fact that the modern Ethiopian nation was the creation of the Amhara and not of European colonists, are characteristics which distinguish Ethiopia from all other African societies. For Ethiopia is the only country in Africa with a large number of ethnic groups where one of these groups has imposed its rule and its language over the rest and has preserved indigenous national institutions, elites, and culture patterns from displacement by Western forms and authorities.

This condition has imparted a basically conservative tone to the character of public life in Ethiopia, especially when compared to the new nations of sub-Saharan Africa. Because Ethiopians did not have to participate in the postwar struggle for independence, they did not experience the rise of agitational politics or the related phenomenon of political parties or movements. As a corollary of this, the Ethiopian populace was not exposed to oratory promising dynamic social and economic changes, and therefore developed no mass base of support for populist leaders who might seek to promote more rapid forms of change.

Yet if modernization has proceeded more slowly in Ethiopia than elsewhere in Africa—and speed in such matters has at times been associated with recklessness—the pattern of virtually unbroken Amhara rule for at least seven centuries stands in refreshing contrast to the somewhat anguished struggle for nationality within the new nations. Elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa no indigenous cultural tradition exists at the national level. There are many degrees to this cultural fragmentation. At one extreme are countries such as the Ivory Coast which, with some sixty disparate tribal groups in a population of about three million, can as yet appeal only to French culture as a basis for unity at the national level. Somewhat less fragmented are the nations, like Nigeria, in which a small number of important tribal traditions dominate the national scene. Still more consolidated is Uganda, whose kingdom of Buganda has long supported a strong quasi-national tradition, but whose non-Baganda tribes have remained largely outside the pale.

In Ethiopia, by contrast, Amhara rule has long provided a minimal basis for national unity. While this rule has been secured by coercive means, it has accustomed the various tribes in Ethiopia to live under a common sovereignty and to some extent has enabled their leaders to communicate with one another by means of a common native tongue.

One need not be blind to the drawbacks of Amhara dominance to recog-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5
Ethiopia MP1

TRADITION AND MODERNITY

AE 121 195 538

Insofar as Ethiopia is committed to the pursuit of modernity, she cannot fail to be embarrassed to some extent by the wax-and-gold complex. For nothing could be more at odds with the ethos of modernization, if not with its actuality, than a cult of ambiguity.[9]

It is true, of course, that cultural formations analogous to wax and gold in their exploitation of ambiguity have been prominent throughout the history of the West, not to mention the whole non-Western world. The Christian tradition has always made much of parables and allegories. The classical teaching of rhetoric, following Cicero, placed great stress on the use of paradox; and a major philosophical tradition, stretching from Plato to Marx, has been founded on a logic which assumes that reality can be known only by combining opposite concepts and that any single term is subject to dual interpretation. The flowering of symbolist literature, to take a more recent example, created an audience as partial to subtle allusion and *double-entendre* as the most obscurantist proponent of *wesṭa wayrā*.

Yet there can be little doubt that the pace-setting spirit of modern Western culture rests on a commitment to unambiguous communication. It is predicated on the proposition that A must be A or not be A. It was no accident that one of the more characteristic philosophical movements of the present century, logical positivism, should have had as its primary motif the desire to maximize precision in the use of language. For the decisive institutions of the modern world—technologies based on logico-experimental science, rational legal systems, and bureaucratic organizations in government, commerce, and industry—depend intimately on the unambiguous definition of terms and the utmost clarity of expression. Whether the task be one of constructing a legal contract, outlining a job description, designing a nuclear reactor, classifying genera and species, or defining variables and their interrelations, these characteristic modern activities are informed by the need and intention to eliminate, as far as possible, all traces of linguistic ambiguity.

E 121 195 199 578

The incorporation of these aspects of modern culture into Ethiopian life must inevitably produce a certain amount of strain in a culture which makes such thoroughgoing use of analogy and equivocation. Indeed, tension generated by this issue has been manifest in a variety of ways. Among the modern-educated Ethiopians, one finds demands for greater clarity in the specification of responsibilities in administration. One finds increased impatience with the devious, equivocal talk involved in joint action of any sort. One finds a slowly growing disposition to structure and fulfil expectations in literal terms, and occasional outbursts of protest against the vagueness and the conspiratorial mentality of those schooled only in the traditional way. In order to escape what they feel are the burdensome subtleties of Amharic,

E 121 195 199

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5 • Ethiopia MP1

some Ethiopians prefer to speak in English in their offices. An alternative solution is proffered by those Amharic writers and journalists who have attempted to adapt Amharic to the modern idiom, replacing the florid, intricate sentence of yore with short, simple, straightforward declarative sentences —an effort that parallels changes in other countries, such as Japan, where an intrinsically more ambiguous language than Amharic in the traditional culture has been revised to facilitate more precise modes of expression.[10]

The opposition between the wax-and-gold complex and the rationalistic aspects of modern culture which some Ethiopians now seek to assimilate is of interest here as an instance of the more general phenomenon toward which this book as a whole is oriented. It is the dilemma posed in all the nations of Asia and Africa by the confrontation of their traditional cultures with their rather recently activated modernist aspirations. To study what is transpiring in these nations in terms of the encounter between tradition and modernity, rather than in terms of the more bland and less biased category of social change, is to focus our attention on a very important aspect of their actual situation: many members of these societies have suddenly been forced to grapple with a number of intellectual and moral dilemmas of great magnitude. The concepts of tradition and modernity are symbols to which they are more or less passionately attached. All of them have concepts symbolizing the sanctity of tradition, like the Amharic *hāymānot abāw* ("faith of the fathers"); and all have concepts symbolizing the goal of modernity, like the Amharic *seltānē* ("civilization"). And in all these nations the conflict between the two sorts of orientation has produced acute forms of disorientation, on the one hand, and extraordinary challenges to creativity, on the other.

Adopting this perspective for the study of "transitional" societies probably opens the door more widely than usual for the intrusion of the biases of the observer. For the observer's own attitudes regarding tradition and modernity naturally affect the order of questions he will ask and the kinds of data he will examine in making his analysis of the "actual situation." They influence, for example, how much attention he pays to the weakening of norms governing traditional kinship systems and whether he views this primarily as a form of social disorganization or primarily as a precondition for more effective societal organization. Accordingly it is fitting that we introduce the analyses to be presented below with a brief statement of the philosophy which guides the author's approach to these questions. This may be done most effectively by surveying the range of positions that might be taken. In considering the encounter between traditional and modern culture patterns currently experienced in acute form in most nations of the world, one may discern, at a high level of abstraction, these five positions: (1) the Traditionalist, (2) the Modernist, (3) the Skeptic, (4) the Conciliatory, and (5) the Pragmatist.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

flushed with the reports of Menelik's conquests[47] and embellished by the wax and gold of Alaqā Gabra Hānnā, was a kind of traditional climax, a final expression of the integrity of traditional Amhara culture.

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

Gondar Today

A renascence of Gondar began during the Italian occupation, when it was made the capital of Amhara, one of the five large provinces into which the Italians divided Ethiopia. They equipped Gondar with modern buildings and roads, restored parts of the old castles, and made it the transportation center of northwestern Ethiopia.

After the liberation, Gondar retained some administrative importance by becoming the capital of Bagemder, one of the twelve provinces of postwar Ethiopia. A further impetus toward development of the town came in 1953 with the selection of Gondar as site for Ethiopia's first public health college. The existence of this college, with its enthusiastic staff of WHO and AID personnel, has stimulated the improvement of transportation and public utilities as well as local medical services. The population has increased to twenty thousand.[48] The progress shown by the city inspired one Ethiopian journalist to write, in the *Addis Zaman* of April 19, 1960: "By virtue of its annually increasing growth, sanitation, and modern appearance, one is emboldened to say that the city of Gondar takes second place only to Addis Ababa."

With the turn of Ethiopia's interest from the old church curriculum to a modern educational program, the traditional importance of Gondar has necessarily declined. It remains the place to go for the study of *aquāquām* and for a "diploma" in textual studies, but the total number of students now pursuing these subjects is probably less than a hundred. Almost none of the young people of Gondar itself attend the higher church schools. Still in the vanguard of learning, Gondar's youth prefer the currently more advantageous government schools. The elementary schools of Gondar receive many more applicants than they can accommodate each year. Gondar's secondary school is, next to that of Harar, the oldest and largest in the provinces.

Nevertheless, the life of Gondar is still dominated by its clergy. Nine church schools in Gondar are supported by government funds. Unlike other cities in Ethiopia, Gondar is partly governed by a town council of clergymen. The city is divided into districts marked by the location of the churches, and the town council consists of the heads of these churches—some of whose positions are so important that they are assigned directly by the Emperor. This council is convened to handle disputes over land and other matters, and to communicate the mayor's proclamations to the people. An accusation signed for a plaintiff by a priest carries much weight in the local courts. The ecclesias-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*565 121 178 181 [212] [577] been employed as a medium for promulgating new ideas or discussing contemporary problems. Another feature of Amhara culture that helps to account for the mental inertia of the peasantry is its emphasis on the value of deference and obedience to authority. The Amhara typically rely on legitimate authority figures to define appropriate responses to new situations, and regard the delegation of powers as a diminution of the status of such authorities. The peasant has thus refrained from initiating changes in the public domain because the prerogative of taking initiative is generally reserved to ecclesiastical and political authorities.

*565 121 • 177 178 *Receptivity to Change*

Consideration of the peasant's readiness to follow the lead of legitimate authorities already points to an inadequacy of the second stereotype we have mentioned: that which sees the peasant as hopelessly ignorant and backward, hence intractable from the viewpoint of a program of modernization. For while the Amhara peasant is likely to resist the efforts of some unknown official from Addis Ababa to introduce change in his local environment, he does tend to follow the directives and imitate the example of the local authorities whom he knows and who shape the course of decisions and sanctions at the [137] local level. Thus it is, for example, that the eucalyptus tree—imported by Emperor Menelik, taken to the provinces by nobles, and eventually planted by individual peasants—has come to dot the Amhara countryside. How quickly such change can take place is shown by the recent acceptance of photography in many provincial regions. In 1950, peasants in many Amhara areas strenuously objected to having their pictures taken, in part at least for fear of the camera as bearer of the evil eye. By 1960, visitors to some of these same areas were being deluged with requests for photographs. In the interim these peasants had been exposed to numerous photographs of the Emperor and high government officials and had observed their local authorities seizing every chance they could to be photographed.

Yet it is clear that the Amhara peasant will not imitate everything that is accepted by his traditional authorities. When a new custom strikes him as too outlandish his resistance can become adamant, as was abundantly demonstrated when the court of Susneyos carried out its ill-fated conversion to Catholicism. In analyzing the peasant's receptivity to change it is important to distinguish as independent variables: (1) the degree of acceptability of the *agents* of change, and (2) the extent to which the proposed change is congruent with traditional beliefs and values.

The whole question of the nature of peasant opposition and receptivity to modernizing programs may be discussed most realistically by focusing on a concrete area of attempted change. The material I have assembled is most [744] detailed for the case of public health, an area to which the government has

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

paid increased attention in recent years. A new phase of public health endeavor in this decade was marked by the imposition of a nationwide health tax in 1960.

Health has become a prime objective in Ethiopia's modernization program because of a growing realization that the wide prevalence of malaria, tuberculosis, typhus, intestinal parasites, syphilis, trachoma, leprosy, and other diseases continues to sap the vitality of the nation's productive forces and to visit misery on countless peasant families. The public health forces in Ethiopia (Ministry of Public Health, WHO mission, and AID Public Health Division) have long understood that Ethiopia's health needs cannot be met by piecemeal therapy. They have undertaken a program of preventive measures by preparing public health teams in the medical college at Gondar. The college trains health officers, community nurses, and sanitarians within a common framework, so that when they go into the field they will understand each other's tasks from the start. The first public health center employing such a team was opened in the late fifties; Ethiopia's Second Five-Year Plan envisions one such center for every fifty thousand people by 1967.

The objective of these public health workers is to transmit a number of instructions—concerning personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, early care for illness, and isolation of contagious diseases—which are at variance with customary beliefs and practices. Experience with comparable programs elsewhere suggests that the success of such health teams is by no means assured.[18] What are the forces working for and against the acceptance of these new instructions by the Amhara peasantry? Both negative and positive factors may be identified with respect to each of the three general categories previously referred to: the general outlook regarding change; attitudes toward the agents of change; and degree of compatibility between the new cultural items and the old.

The Amhara peasant's general resistance to change may be presumed operative here as elsewhere, particularly since health practices are often associated with religious beliefs and sentiments. Defense of indigenous therapies has in fact become a significant channel for the expression of traditionalist sentiment, a channel that has even been utilized on occasion in the Addis Ababa newspapers.[19] And a general posture of resistance to changes in the field of health is supported by the interests of traditional practitioners, *dabtarā* and *ṭanquāy*, who are in danger of losing clientele if modern-trained health workers come to win their allegiance.

Counter to this conservative drag, on the other hand, is the peasant's powerful desire for one basic change in his life circumstances, namely, the reduction of morbidity and mortality. Despite his idyllic conception of paradise and his frequent contention that life on earth is something of little value, the Amhara wants to avoid death. Even from the religious point of view he is

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*565 121 177 178 75 761 motivated to live as long as possible: the monk wants to live longer in order to get closer to God by prayer, and the worldly man wants to live long enough to atone for his sins so that he may enter paradise. Health thus rates as one of the most important values. The expressions for greeting and farewell stress health. Most of the prayers and vows offered have to do with achieving health. Long, painful pilgrimages are made for cures, and much money is spent for the remedies of native practitioners and for amulets to ward off illness. This powerful desire for health and life operates as a lever to overcome the resistance to change.

*565 121 177 829 Toward the bearers of new ideas designed to satisfy this desire for reduced morbidity and mortality, however, the peasant's stance is suspicious and unsympathetic at the outset. He regards Ethiopians who have been educated by Westerners as contaminated by alien norms and beliefs. They appear to him as Ethiopians, but also as strangers—as "black *faranj*"—with their European clothes and their unorthodox eating and smoking habits. He tends to distrust their motives, to suspect them of being out to take advantage of him in some way. And he resents their overt or implicit disparagement of his way of life, particularly his practices in so sensitive an area as sanitation.

*565 121 177 744 [554] Against such obstacles one cultural factor that serves to present the health worker as an acceptable agent of change is the Amhara peasant's deference to the man of learning. The public health worker is in a position to inherit some of the awe felt for the learned *dabtarā*, especially since the health teams operate out of centers which provide therapy as well as instruction, which gives them the benefit of association with the quasi-magical powers attributed to one who performs successful treatment. In addition, he can be aided by the Amhara peasant's personal devotion to someone who has helped him and won his confidence. Whether this devotion can be stimulated depends, in the last analysis, on the character and resourcefulness of the public health workers themselves. Those who are able to communicate in a dignified manner with the peasants, who avoid dealing with them as an inferior and backward people, who refrain from flaunting the most important local norms, and who are on good terms with local authorities and respected men, have a substantial chance of being accepted after an initial period of suspicion and alienation. Thus it was that a Gojjami peasant, asked why some of the local people were hearkening to the advice of the public health team at Dabra Marqos, explained: "We have come to realize that what you tell us to do is for our own advantage, not yours." Elsewhere in Gojjam, a similar response was the eventual issue of a more pronounced initial rejection of public health workers. In the village of Dajan doors were closed against a venereal disease team which was taking blood samples of the entire population for Kahn test analysis. Popular suspicion was voiced in a number of ways; the health workers were accused of selling blood, of being missionaries, and of otherwise trying

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

to cheat the locals. The health officer in charge of the team then brought some of the objectors to the mobile laboratory, patiently explained what was going on, and how it would benefit the people. Before long word got around that these outsiders were not so evil after all, and the doors of Dajan opened.

Given the possibility that the Amhara peasant may come to acknowledge the public health worker as a legitimate agent of change, what about the discrepancy between the ideas advanced by the public health workers and the ideas of his traditional culture? The conception of the causation of illness is radically different in the two cultures. Since the peasant views the etiology of disease as a function of the will of supernatural beings, on what grounds could he adhere to prophylactic measures based on naturalistic conceptions?

Valid though our characterization of the peasant's concept of causation may be, it is nevertheless a very simplified one. It is unlikely that any world view is totally devoid of some sort of naturalistic explanations, just as, conversely, well-educated moderns often cling to residues of "superstition." Though the Amhara's general framework for understanding causation is not naturalistic, he does possess a number of specific notions which can be interpreted as naturalistic or protonaturalistic. Here are some examples:

(1) The belief that an excessively dirty house brings sickness (even though in practice animals are permitted to urinate and defecate indoors and strings of soot to hang from the rafters).

(2) A vague notion that the daily washing of hands, mouth, and feet is related to health.

(3) The concept of *metch*, an ailment involving fever and pains, believed to come from exposure to dirty places as well as excessive exposure to the sun (though the devil is often thought to be the conveyer of the ailment).

(4) The concept of *gershā*, a notion that a convalescent is liable to relapse unless he refrains from eating unaccustomed foods, resumes work slowly, stays out of the sun, and washes his body and clothes.

(5) A latent concept of contagion, found in: (a) the belief that smelling the urine of another will give one a cold, (b) the belief that the breath of a typhus patient will communicate his disease, and (c) the custom of referring to all diseases which can be given by one person to another as "*zār* sickness."

Even when the explanations set forth by the health workers deviate too much from what the peasant can possibly conceive as plausible, there may still be grounds to justify his accepting some strange advice through an appeal to more familiar beliefs and interests less directly related to the matter at hand. Thus, while peasants have been reluctant to accept the sanitarian's argument that diseases will be prevented by sanitizing the water supply through building wells, they have often been persuaded to build wells by the prospect of securing a more convenient source of water.

Measuring the relative strength of forces supporting and opposing change

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*565 121 • 177 among the peasantry in public health and other fields of planned development is a task that requires intensive empirical studies.[20] But it should be sufficiently clear from the foregoing that the view of the Amhara peasantry as incorrigibly recalcitrant and reactionary is a rather shallow one. Amhara peasant culture contains potentialities for change that are as real as its most rigid beliefs and its substantial antipathy to change. The challenge to social statesmanship and social science alike is to understand the peasant's world in a more analytically precise way so that the diverse potentialities for change can be identified, but in the context of the total structure of peasant life.

*565 121

The Legacy of Peasant Culture

Our discussion so far has treated the peasant as a wholly passive entity in contemporary Ethiopia. Whether the emphasis has been on the peasant's resistance to innovation or on his receptivity to change, he has been considered from one point of view: that of the Modernist anxious to transform Ethiopian society according to secular ideals. Common to both the modern-educated Ethiopians, who consider the peasant primarily an object for manipulation and coercion, and to those who think more in terms of providing friendly leadership and perhaps securing future political support, is the assumption that they really have nothing to learn from peasant culture, that peasant culture has nothing of substance to contribute to an Ethiopia in transition.

Whether this assumption is just or not can only be decided by Ethiopians themselves. Ironically, it is easier for an outsider to question it and to search for aspects of peasant culture that might contribute to a more meaningful national experience during the coming decades of transition. The type of possible contribution to be explored here concerns the mode of defining and responding to the situation of rapid change which Ethiopia has entered.

The social environment of contemporary Ethiopia is very tense and affords few outlets for the constructive release of tensions. The discrepancy between the growing desire for aspects of modern culture and the persistence of many old customs and problems has generated much impatience, anxiety, and ennui among the modern-educated. Their sense of inadequacy vis-à-vis Western "metropolitan" standards is no less painful for their having escaped a long heritage of colonial domination, and combined with a sense of failure to move rapidly toward aspired goals has created in many of the modern-educated marked self-destructive tendencies. Insofar as this destructiveness has not turned inward it has been projected outward against other elements inside Ethiopia and without.

One of these targets is the uneducated mass of the people, who, as we have seen, are often regarded as so backward that the only way one can bring progress to them is through coercion and authoritarian manipulation. Another target, naturally enough, has been the higher officials of the govern-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

4

THE EMERGING ADOLESCENT

While it is clear, as we have argued thus far, that a modernizing society stands to benefit from retaining or redefining many aspects of its traditional culture, it is also clear that in certain areas discontinuity is indispensable if significant change is to be brought about. Just what these areas are is something which presumably varies from nation to nation, though cross-cultural regularities may perhaps be uncovered in the course of further research. In the case of Ethiopia's incipient modernization, at least two subsystems of the traditional social system of the ruling Amhara have already undergone some sort of structural change: that of "secondary socialization," the complex of processes whereby skills and values necessary for adult life are imparted to adolescents; and that of the stratification system—the complex of arrangements whereby status is allocated to members of a society in accord with the various values upheld by the society.

An important precondition for the changes which have taken place in both of these areas was the establishment of a permanent capital: Addis Ababa, founded by Menelik in 1887[1] and now home for nearly half a million Ethiopians. Menelik's institution of the first government school in Addis Ababa in 1908 marked the beginning of a slow but steady process of introducing some of Ethiopia's youth to the novel skills and norms of modern Western culture. The concentration of power in Addis Ababa through the reign of Haile Selassie has diminished the status of the traditional Amhara elites and brought

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

New Agents of Socialization

In Amhara society, as we have seen, the agents of primary socialization—parents and older relatives—likewise prepare the young person for adulthood, by teaching him work skills, arranging his marriage, and conditioning him to the mores of adult society. In changing Ethiopia, these traditional managers of adolescence are unable to impart the skills and values needed for a modern life. Their role as agents of secondary socialization is taken for the most part by teachers and peers in the government schools.

Schools at the post-elementary levels in Ethiopia have been staffed mainly by teachers brought under contract from foreign countries—chiefly Canada, England, India, Sweden, and the United States. Together with a growing number of Ethiopians who have studied abroad, and some graduates of Ethiopian colleges, these teachers have been the principal medium through which Ethiopian adolescents have been exposed to Western culture, not only by teaching subjects like science and English literature, and skills like drafting and stenography, but also by imparting attitudes and values important for Ethiopia's modernization.

High among these new values is that of rewarding an individual solely on the basis of performance. Although the long arm of "connections" has occasionally reached into the school system, to save, for example, the relative of some dignitary from dismissal despite substandard performance, the day-to-day operation of school life follows general standards which are applied without regard to family connections, class position, or tribal and religious affiliations.* The degree to which the students have accepted the sovereignty of universal norms is reflected in their response to the question: "In general, what will help you most to get ahead, ability or 'pull' (that is, personal contacts or influence, through family or friends)?" Nine-tenths of the students at both secondary and college levels expressed the belief that ability would help them more to get ahead.

Another modern value promoted by the school staffs is that of Ethiopian nationalism. In the elementary schools outside of Addis Ababa, pupils tend to associate chiefly with members of their own tribe and religion. In the post-elementary schools, they inevitably have considerable intercourse with members of other groups. On the basis of our sample, the ethnic composition of the post-elementary schools may be estimated as in Table 2. This ethnic pluralism would seem at first to intensify particularistic sentiments among

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 115]

* This reflects deliberate government policy. Before the occupation, sons of noblemen were segregated at Tafari Makonnen School and received preferential treatment. After the liberation, the Emperor not only discontinued this policy but took pains to eliminate favoritism in the schools to a large degree.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

the students. Rivalries and hostilities tend to get channeled along these lines, particularly along the Amhara-Tigre axis, and petty fights have erupted from time to time among groups of students so divided. The Amhara students, moreover, tend to interpret their numerical majority in school as self-evident justification of their political superiority in the country, an interpretation sullenly rejected by non-Amhara students who tend to be more aware of the Amhara's much smaller percentage of the national population. However, the students are regarded by their teachers, not as members of tribes, but as Ethiopians. The school authorities thus act as a countervailing force in behalf of national symbols, and their effect is considerable.[14] While entering students naturally tend to identify in the first instance with their tribes, sixty per cent of the secondary school seniors and seventy-five per cent of the college students questioned about political identifications indicated that they considered themselves Ethiopians before they considered themselves members of tribes.

The teachers also provide practical information of various sorts to assist the acculturation of their charges. They teach the etiquette of modernity, including the importance of punctuality and the keeping of promises. The objects and events in their own lives quietly demonstrate to the students much about modern Western culture, while their use of English in and out of class accustoms the students to the use of their country's official European language. Thus, besides promoting respect for impersonal standards and the sense of Ethiopian nationalism, the teachers fulfill a third extracurricular function of some importance: that of making the schools a vehicle for social mobility, a place to acquire that minimum of European habits which is essential for attaining high status in a modernizing society.

The total accomplishment of the teachers, however, falls short of giving the modern adolescents a coherent orientation to life. The cultural lessons they transmit are neither consistent among the various schools nor closely related to the situation of changing Ethiopia. The organization of education, as of everything else in Ethiopia, reflects the abiding anxiety of the government about permitting any one foreign nation to gain a monopoly in any sphere of activity. Each secondary school and college has heretofore been virtually autonomous, pursuing those policies and teaching those lessons which best fit its point of view, a point of view now guided by British culture, now by American, now by Swedish, now by French, now by Jesuit. As Margery Perham long since observed, this created a situation in which Ethiopian students have gotten "fragments from the experience and ideals of each [nation] without getting the fullest and best influence from any one national tradition."[15]

Another shortcoming of the educational program has been the relative paucity of materials relating to Ethiopian realities. As one Ethiopian educator has written: "School children are at times more familiar with the history of

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

might be expected, the incidence of disapproval was highest among the students of the Gondar secondary school (fifty-eight per cent), whose parents are presumably more traditionalist than those of the Addis Ababa boys, and the students of the technical school (fifty-six per cent), whose occupational interests, involving manual labor and technical skills, are felt to resemble those artisan pursuits traditionally disesteemed by the Amhara.

Time is on the side of the students. As Ethiopia develops and education spreads, the advantages of prolonged training and modern occupations will become increasingly apparent to the parents. For some time to come, however, their resentment of the dependence of youth on foreigners and Western-educated Ethiopians for occupational guidance will continue to generate social tensions and impede the socialization process.

The harmonious pattern of preparation for adult work roles found in traditional Amhara society has been further disrupted under the new school system at at least two points: the point at which occupational commitments are made, and the point of entry into the work force.

The modern adolescent is supposed to choose which of several kinds of schools, representing a variety of vocational commitments, he wishes to enter upon successful completion of the eighth-grade exam. Quite often his choice is dictated by wholly irrelevant factors. For example, it may be made on the basis of which of the available schools promises the best standard of living.[19] Or it may be made for him by the school system, for one finds cases where the student's preferences are disregarded and he is placed in whatever school and vocational program happens to be able to accommodate him.

Even when the student's choice is relatively free from such extraneous determinants, however, it is usually difficult for him to make a meaningful decision. Eight grades of a rudimentary curriculum is hardly an adequate basis for choosing from a variety of unfamiliar vocations. So it is "fate" that guides most youngsters into one or another of the secondary school programs. The problem of choice recurs, for a much smaller number, when commitments are again required for entrance into the colleges. At this point meaningful decisions are often made, but perhaps more often they are spun from a skein of bewilderment. One secondary school graduate summed up the situation by saying, "Foreigners frequently ask young educated Ethiopians, 'What do you want to become?' How do we know? This whole business of *choosing* is entirely new to us, and we know very little about the alternatives that we have now. It is all very confusing."

So far the modernizing sector has provided little, beyond vocational pamphlets in the school libraries and an occasional school debate on the respective values of different occupations, to help orient the students on these matters.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

883* 581 586 178 [52]

love and the image of the traditional Amhara marriage, likely as not to end in divorce. This sort of concern was expressed in a revealing way in the following statement by a twenty-year-old college student:

> The main thing I want in my wife is good character. Beauty is not so important. Of course she will be an excellent cook. But mostly I am concerned that she be the *right* one for me; I do not want to get divorced. But you can't really know if she is the right one until after ten years of married life. If after having about five or six children it turns out troublesome, I will have to leave her. A person cannot go on living that way.

883* 178 581 589

In some instances, ironically, this quest for the perfect marriage leads to a rejection of the very institution of marriage itself. Seven per cent of the students questioned indicated that they do not want to get married eventually—either because they "could never afford it," they "would be happier living single," or they just *"do not want to enter a relation that will end in divorce."* Thus at a time when the stability and warmth of family life are needed more than ever, the very possibility of family is doubted.

581 177

Some Ethiopian students blame the deteriorated family and an alleged increase in divorce in their country on the impact of Western civilization. True, the introduction of the Western concept of marriage and of the rudiments of a modern occupational system have dislocated the traditional arrangements for marriage; and other related problems, to be discussed in the next chapter, plague the Western-educated elite. But Western civilization has also developed resources to begin to cope with analogous problems in its own societies, and perhaps it is not too soon to acquaint Ethiopia's youth with some of these: for example, the recent developments in man's understanding of the dynamics of marriage as well as more sophisticated conceptions of the ideal and importance of family life in modern society.

CULTURAL ORIENTATION

561

A generational conflict manifests itself further with respect to questions of belief, taste, and value. Because of differences on such issues, students and their parents have grown far apart. The more traditionalist of the older generation refer to the modern youth as *ya-sĭmmĭntaññā shi lĭjjotch* ("children of the eighth millennium"); that is, of that corrupt time the Amhara believe will precede the destruction of the world. The latter, in turn, refer to the old-fashioned as ignorant, uncivilized, sometimes even "savage."

883* 561 178

Yet, as we have been suggesting, this conflict is by no means total. Amhara adolescents are too deeply attached to many aspects of their traditional culture to engage in wholesale rebellion. Because of strict childhood training they remain basically respectful toward their elders. In addition, they often prefer to champion their own traditions in the spirit of a freshly excited nationalism.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

So the orientation of the modern adolescents is a complex one, demanding detailed analysis. In this section we shall discuss data that give some indication of their attitudes regarding religion, science, taste, morality, and politics.

Religion.—With regard to a general commitment to religion Ethiopian students today remain in good part tradition-directed. They mention "religion" more frequently than any other matter except success in school as the question on which they are most in accord with their parents. Religious themes are mentioned more frequently than any other in response to the question, "As a parent, what specific lesson will you try hardest to teach your children?"

Table 8 describes the incidence of student adherence to some of the traditional religious practices in Ethiopia. As might be expected, there is a consistent decrease in conventional religiosity as one moves from the secondary to the college level. Perhaps more significant is the extent to which the modern adolescents do remain faithful to the old religious practices, in view of their considerable alienation from the institution of the Ethiopian Church.[21]

Despite its toleration of a few reforms instigated by Haile Selassie, such as permitting women to sit alongside men in some of the Addis Ababa churches and providing occasional sermons in the vernacular Amharic, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has not yet begun to adjust to the demands of the modern era. It remains rooted in the experience of an isolated peasant civilization, fixed on the past rather than turned toward the present and future. Thus it has neglected the substantial religious needs of the modern adolescents, who are eager for a fresh treatment of the great matters which religion has traditionally interpreted. But when youth today look for spiritual guidance, they find archaic liturgy; and when they look for spiritual inspiration and social teachings, they are told only to fast and observe the other hallowed customs.

It is this state of things, as well as the natural secularization of life in the cities, that has turned a number of students away from religion altogether. Many more, however, have sought to retain some sort of religious life by making new kinds of adjustment themselves. One alternative has been a privatization of faith, making religion a primarily personal matter no longer dependent on the institution of the church. Another alternative has been to adopt one of the Western forms of Christianity through contact with one of the various missions in Ethiopia.* In recent years a third alternative has fired

* In this they have been attracted more by Protestantism than by Catholicism, and for two reasons. The biblical purism and evangelical fervor of the Protestant missions seem best suited to meet their needs for total commitment and reorientation. Catholicism, moreover, is represented to them chiefly by the Jesuit order, whose members have managed two important schools in Ethiopia and many have earned a bad name among students because of their political style.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

the imagination of some other students: attempting to reform the Orthodox Church from within. This has been done within the framework of the Orthodox Students Association, which will be discussed further in chapter vii.

Science.—Of all the aspects of Western culture to which they have been exposed, Ethiopia's students have been most receptive to the teachings of natural science. They tend to regard it as the most important single benefit which Ethiopia can gain from Western civilization. After religion, morals, and manners, "science" is the response students give most often to the question: "What specific lesson will you try hardest to teach your children?"

TABLE 8

EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS OBSERVE TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Practice	Secondary School (per cent)	College (per cent)
Follow the fasts:		
All the time	38	16
Most of the time	26	23
Sometimes	27	24
Not at all	9	37
Go to church (mosque):		
More than once a week	9	2
Once a week	59	40
Less than once a week	25	36
Not at all	7	22
Bow to church (mosque):		
Always	28	9
Some/most of the time	50	38
Not at all	22	53
Pray:		
Twice or more daily	64	40
Once a day	22	23
Once or twice a week	6	14
Once or twice a month	5	10
Not at all	3	13
Number	(485)	(195)

Disagreement on such questions as the nature of solar eclipses, the descent of man, and the etiology of disease is common between the modern adolescents and their own parents. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assume that the scientific imagination has yet displaced traditional thought patterns in the minds of Ethiopian students, or that scientific beliefs have fully replaced

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*883 815 178 • 177 "superstitious" beliefs about the world. Concerning this latter issue we are fortunate to have a substantial study carried out by Dr. Edith Lord during 1956–57—a study of the beliefs of some 1,250 Ethiopian students and teachers.[22]

[125] The subjects of this study were asked to mark as true or false a list of 132 unscientific beliefs commonly held by Ethiopians. These beliefs dealt with nature and devils, health and disease, danger and death. In spite of a measurable trend toward increased disbelief in the unscientific statements as the level of schooling increased, it was found that a significant number of these statements were accepted by a majority both of the post-elementary students and of the Ethiopian teachers. Thus, 56 items were believed by half or more of the 451 secondary students in the sample; 34 items by half or more of the 96 teachers; 9 items by half or more of the 61 student nurses and first-aid workers; and 6 of the items by half or more of the 29 college freshmen. Table 9 shows some of those unscientific beliefs most commonly subscribed to by secondary school students. These particular items are of interest for two additional reasons. The first five of them were among the beliefs held by *a majority of the twenty-nine college freshmen*. The first and the last, moreover, are among those items which showed an *increasing* frequency of belief with an increase in education, from the first four primary grades, through the second four grades, to the secondary level.

TABLE 9

UNSCIENTIFIC BELIEFS ACCEPTED BY SECONDARY STUDENTS

Item No.	Belief	Percentage of Secondary Students Holding the Belief
53	Certain mineral waters can cure stomach trouble by causing a person to vomit worms, sometimes frogs or toads	88
35	There are some skillful persons who can summon the devil at will	87
102	Too much charity leads to madness	74
58	A child will grow better if the nerves are removed from under his back teeth	68
84	If you go into a room which has been closed for a long time, you will be attacked by Satan	57
78	A man who has skill in stopping rains must not eat or drink while he is performing the ceremony to stop rain, or he will be unsuccessful	64
	Number	(451)

[125] In my own questionnaire, administered three years after Dr. Lord's re-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

search and only to the highest grades of secondary school and college, three questions regarding unscientific beliefs were included. In a pilot study of sixty secondary school seniors and juniors, 42 per cent held the belief that "a person can be made sick by the evil eye of a *budā*," and 33 per cent believed that "too much learning results in madness." To the one question asked of my entire sample: "Do you believe that some learned *dabtarā* can cause rain to fall or stop?," 16 per cent of 500 secondary and 7 per cent of 200 college seniors and juniors said "Yes."

This persistence among the educated youth of traditional beliefs which run counter to the consensus of modern scientists has been attributed by Lord to the inadequacies of the Ethiopian school system. This is as might be expected, inasmuch as most Ethiopian teachers have had relatively little education themselves and the curriculum has necessarily been somewhat improvised and incomplete. Officials of the Ministry of Education have labored to overcome these deficiencies, and certain changes were in fact made in consequence of Lord's study which aim at combating the more dysfunctional of the prevailing superstitions.

It seems likely, however, that certain irrational dispositions are also involved here, dispositions to maintain the unscientific beliefs in spite of improvements in teaching methods and materials. One would predict this on the basis of general sociological understanding of the consequences of rapid social change. The disruption of the traditional belief systems brought about by the sudden dissemination of scientific beliefs inevitably creates insecurity, and a common reaction to such insecurity is to cling with increased tenacity to some of the old-fashioned beliefs which are closely identified with the traditional culture.[23]

One area in which this defensive "revivalism" can be observed in Ethiopia is that of medicine. Many Ethiopians who have received modern secondary education maintain that Western medicine, while useful in many cases, represents only one possible approach to the problem of sickness and health.[24] Thus, fifty-seven per cent of the secondary students questioned asserted that traditional Ethiopian medicines are effective all or most of the time, although such therapies include the eating of rancid butter to cure malaria or drinking holy water to cure serious functional disorders. Dr. Lord herself has reported an episode which throws much light on the psychology of this reaction:

> An Ethiopian colleague, a former teacher, warned me against drinking water in a certain provincial town on penalty of my catching malaria. He was challenged thus: "You are one of the better educated persons in Ethiopia; don't you know the cause of malaria?" He quickly, and eruditely, gave all the known scientific facts about malaria. Then he added, "You people from the United States (and the United Nations) think that this (the scientif-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

ically established cycle) is the only way to catch malaria. We Ethiopians know better. We know that one can *also* catch malaria from drinking the water in places where the Anopheles breed."[28]

The ambivalence toward Western science represented by this statement and by the persistence of analogous attitudes among many educated Ethiopians undoubtedly brings the individuals in question a degree of security that would be lost were they to abandon the traditional, unscientific belief system *in toto*. Perhaps a more solid sort of security could be derived from a program of education which not only imparts scientific information and attitudes, but also educates people to adapt themselves to the changes which the introduction of science involves.

Taste.—In matters of taste, Ethiopia's modern adolescents range from extreme traditionalism to extreme Westernism, with most of them preferring both traditional and European or American patterns in varying proportions. Of food the students tend to prefer the traditional varieties, most popular of which are *doro wat* and *ǐnjarā*. Among Western foods they are fondest of pastries and Italian *pasta*. On the other hand, they are more inclined toward Western beverages than Ethiopian ones. The most popular Western beverages are, for the secondary students, soft drinks, and for the college students, beer; among Ethiopian drinks they prefer *ṭallā* first and milk second.

With regard to their manner of eating, the students' taste is traditional in that most prefer to eat nowhere but within the home, and to eat with their hands rather than use silverware; but it is Westernized in that most prefer eating at their own individual places rather than all together with others out of a common *ǐnjarā* basket. Opinion is most divided on the matter of exchanging *gurshā*, a morsel of food which one places in another's mouth. The slight majority who reject this old custom do so because they find it "noisy," "childish," "unsanitary," or simply "out of fashion"; while those who still enjoy it do so chiefly because it "expresses affection."

On questions of dress it should be noted that traditionally the Amhara have sentimentalized their going barefoot as well as their national costume. But because of the practical advantages of wearing tailored clothes at work and using shoes, and perhaps still more because of their high prestige in the modernizing sector, virtually all of the students prefer the European fashion in these matters. On the other hand, with respect to women's wear and the sort of dress to be worn on holidays, the great majority opt the Ethiopian *shammā*.

In their aesthetic interests the students' taste varies considerably according to the medium. With regard to poetry and music, Ethiopian forms are preferred to Western ones, while Western forms of painting and dance are more popular with them than Ethiopian. Poetry stands as the most appreciated of

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

Poetry stands as the most appreciated of all traditional forms of expression, and nearly two-thirds of the secondary and half the college students state that they compose Amharic verse themselves, on occasions ranging from public celebrations to private moments of great joy or sorrow. This is as might be expected in view of the tremendous importance of poetry in traditional Amhara culture (see chapters vi and vii). Painting, on the other hand, has played a rather inconspicuous part in Abyssinia. (Its genuine achievement in the high culture, the often remarkable Ethiopian miniatures, is frequently repudiated by modernizing Ethiopians for being too "backward.") Those students who do prefer Ethiopian-style paintings explain their preference on the grounds that they find them more intelligible and closer to Ethiopian life, and stress their value as reminders of Ethiopia's past.[28] The majority who prefer European-style paintings offer primarily mechanical reasons; they find them more "efficient," "systematic," and "accurate"—more "up-to-date."

In response to a question on their favorite type of foreign music, the students gave a wide variety of answers, ranging from "Oriental" and "religious" to "Rose, Rose, I Love You" and "Mozart." By far the most frequently mentioned musical preference was "classical" (20 per cent). This was followed by approximately equal percentages of preference for American popular songs; jazz and swing; rock 'n' roll; and Sudanese music. Of foreign dances, the most popular are the waltz and the tango (17 per cent each), followed at some distance by rock 'n roll, cha cha cha, and jitterbug. In their movie preferences, finally, historical (17 per cent) and educational (12 per cent) films are the favorites, followed by war, detective, and adventure films.

One other area of consumption should be discussed in this context: the use of cigarettes. To the tradition-minded Amhara smoking symbolizes all that is objectionable in Western culture, while to some of the modern adolescents it symbolizes the excitement and "life" of modernity. The number of these latter is not really very high, at least not among those still in school; but it is noteworthy that emphatic rejection of smoking by most of the students is based primarily on the rationalistic arguments that it is injurious to health and wastes money, rather than on the traditional argument that it is sinful and counter to Christian custom. The most violent reactions of any, however, were aroused by the question: "How do you feel about women smoking?" In the secondary school sample to which this question was posed, disapproval was practically unanimous, and the comments included "makes me ashamed," "it is scaring," "I could choke her to death," and "worse than hell itself."

A few minor differences in taste appear in connection with differences in sex and school attended. The female students in our secondary school sample show a greater partiality to native foods than do the males, and, on the other hand, greater interest in Western music and dance. Peculiarities in the sub-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

cultures of different schools account for a few other minor variations. Thus, for example, preference for Scottish dance is expressed chiefly among students of a school run by a British staff; the only kind of foreign music preferred by students of the Theological School is Sudanese music, that is, the kind most similar to Ethiopian music; and the University College, most urbane of the Ethiopian schools, is the only one where a majority of respondents indicated that they enjoy smoking.

Of all the differences, the most conspicuous is that between the secondary

TABLE 10

AESTHETIC PREFERENCES OF STUDENTS

Area of Consumption	Percentage of Students Who			Number
	Prefer "Traditional" or "Ethiopian" Forms	Prefer "European" or "Foreign" Forms	Indicate No Preference	
Dress for women	85	15	0	(700)
Food	80	16	4	(700)
Cigarettes*	71	10	19	(700)
Dress on holidays	70	26	4	(700)
Poetry	67	26	7	(700)
Music	62	35	3	(700)
Manner of eating†	40	58	2	(700)
Dance	38	56	6	(700)
Drink	24	56	20	(700)
Painting	23	67	10	(700)

* "Like to smoke" versus "do not like to smoke."

† Combines responses on "*gursha*" and eating in common or at individual places, which were practically identical.

school students and the college students. For in each of the areas discussed above in which traditional or Ethiopian patterns were set alongside European or foreign patterns, *the move from the secondary level to college level was accompanied by a decrease in preference for traditional patterns.*

If now we overlook these differences and calculate the total response, we obtain the profile shown in Table 10, which provides some idea of the range of variation in the students' taste with regard to items from Ethiopian and foreign cultures.

Morals.—The moral values reinforced during traditional Amhara adolescence are by no means rejected during modern Ethiopian adolescence, but their significance is somewhat attenuated due to the new conditions of life in

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

the government schools. The weakening of family controls by the new school environment has slightly reduced the importance of loyalty to kin in the students' scheme of things, and has significantly reduced the moral authority of religious customs. A third sphere of norms—respect and obedience toward elders and persons of authority—is maintained by the hierarchical school system, officially headed by the Emperor himself. However, the ambiguous status of foreign teachers and their frequent inability or unwillingness to play the traditional authoritarian role tends to weaken this, for the possibility of informal, even joking, relations with foreign teachers gives Amhara students their first taste of a more relaxed relation to authority figures. (Unprepared by any other experience for such a relationship, their reaction tends to be one of exploiting the permissive teacher as much as possible while at the same time losing respect for him.)

Finally, the expectation of physical stamina and aggressiveness in the Amhara *goramsā* is carried over into the school setting but with definite modification. It prevails in the feeling that one must not tolerate insults or be cowardly. It also persists in altered form in the new pattern of athletic activities instituted by the schools. On the other hand, the greater camaraderie expected among schoolmates means that aggression must also be carefully controlled. An indication of the psychological difficulties to which the crowded yet sociable conditions of school life have given rise appears in response to the question: "What is the worst thing that could justifiably be said against you?" The most frequent sort of answer to this question relates to unchecked aggression: "Quick to anger," "quarrelsome," "ill tempered."

Of the new moral values inculcated by the school system, some of the main ones appear to be self-development via education; honesty; sportsmanship; and social responsibility.

Ethiopians often speak of the "value" (*ṭiqem*) of education, meaning thereby the path to a well-paying job and a higher standard of living. But one would be mistaken to suppose that this explanation exhausts the meaning that education has for the modern adolescents. The freeing of their imagination and the exercise of previously unknown intellectual capacities prove themselves thrilling experiences for each new class of students. And their most preferred pastime is "reading," their most popular films are educational ones. A number of students spontaneously declared, when asked about the real reason they go to school, "to learn about the world" and "to learn about humanity."

In the traditional culture of Abyssinia, learning was highly valued, to be sure. But its task was to produce a class of literati capable of transmitting the hallowed beliefs and symbols. Education for the sake of inquiry as such or for personal development was never permitted in its program. If the value of

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*883 66 ical wit and activism displayed by students from other countries has embarrassed their cautious dispositions.

There are three reasons for this relative lack of politicization of the Ethiopian students. One is that, having maintained her ancient independence throughout the "scramble for Africa," Ethiopia entered the twentieth century as an independent nation; and five years of Italian rule were not sufficient to shake her spirit. Ethiopian students have thus not had to participate in the anti-imperialist movement, the great school for political activism in the colonial areas.

[648]

[571] [157] A second factor is the deeply rooted habit of total subordination to any legitimate authority. Because of this orientation there is a persisting disposition to relegate concern for all political questions to the highest authorities. Nearly two-thirds of the secondary students and a third of the college students maintain that one should always obey the order of a superior, arguing that "obedience is a virtue," "things would not go right otherwise," and "the Bible says so."

[570] [829]

*883 66 641 The third reason for the almost apolitical posture of Ethiopian students has been the absence of opportunities for political expression in their country. African students from British colonies have in the past been surprised to find that their colonial situation admitted far more freedom of speech and press than Ethiopia. Teachers are expected to keep anything remotely connected with Ethiopian politics out of the classroom, and the editors are expected to keep them out of the newspapers. Nor have the students been permitted to form any kind of politically relevant associations. Even casual discussion of domestic political problems among friends has been curtailed because of the all-pervading fear of government informers.

*883 66 177 All this has not prevented Ethiopian students from being affected to a moderate degree by the libertarian and egalitarian ideals of the West. The teaching of European history in secondary school, evaluation of students' performance without respect to class or tribal affiliation, and the exercise of electing student officers in the colleges have acted to leaven the political imagination of the students. Many of them thus ventured a degree of political criticism in their anonymous questionnaires. Forty-three per cent indicated disapproval of the existing differences between "big men" and the common people. Thirty-nine per cent were critical of the degree of control exerted by the government, of which group two-thirds felt that governmental controls are too strict (e.g., not permitting free expression), and one-third felt they were not strict enough (e.g., with respect to corruption and provincial administration).

*883 66 829

*883 668 669 The abortive coup d'état of December, 1960, jarred the Addis Ababa college students into an unprecedented state of political activity.[27] In response

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

In these attitudes one may note the persistence of such traditional valuations as the esteem for power, the stress on religion, and the concern about polite and dignified behavior, alongside such modernist valuations as the esteem for civilization (*seltänë*) and science. With regard to the emerging world power of Africa, however, the students have been rapidly coming to reject the traditional Abyssinian viewpoint, which looks with disdain upon the Negroid peoples of Africa as racially and culturally inferior.

As recently as a decade ago, a group of Ethiopian college students responded with ridicule and evident disdain to an illustrated ethnographic account of some East African tribes. But in the late 1950's, due to the growing

TABLE 13

ATTITUDES OF ETHIOPIAN STUDENTS TOWARD THE "BIG THREE" POWERS

Classification of Comments	England (per cent)	U.S.A. (per cent)	U.S.S.R. (per cent)
Positive.....	32	59	47
Negative.....	37	19	26
Neutral.....	11	5	6
No answer....	20	17	21
Number..	(640)	(700)	(662)

prominence of the African independence movement and the decision of the Ethiopian government to take more interest in African affairs, the pan-African sentiment began to invade the heretofore aloof highland plateau of Ethiopia. The attendance in Ethiopian colleges of students from other African countries and the growing number of pan-African meetings in Addis Ababa have promoted this trend. Consequently a number of Ethiopian students now follow with growing interest the developments in other African countries, and not a few indicated that their identification with Africa as a whole was stronger than their identification with Ethiopia. All but 8 per cent of the 700 students questioned: "What do you think about Africa?" had some response that showed concern, whether sympathy for African independence and getting rid of the Europeans (28 per cent), or sensitivity about Africa's "undeveloped" and "uncivilized" state and its need to work hard (33 per cent), or pride and confidence in Africa's resources and future (24 per cent).

So deeply rooted a sentiment as prejudice against Negroid Africans cannot quickly be willed away. It does seem, however, that the emergence of the

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

appeared to the students as the source of their new goods; of their learning, health, and well-being. Because of a feeling that "he supplies everything" and "he is my guardian," students of all grades have been among the most sincere and enthusiastic supporters of Haile Selassie. So their adoption of Western patterns has from the outset been legitimated by the highest traditional authority, and the harshness of the culture clash has been softened by the symbolization of both tradition and modernity in the Imperial Person. Here the traditional pattern of "functional deviance" re-asserts itself. The adolescent rebels against the traditional demands of his parents, but expends that deviant energy on behalf of legitimate symbols of the national society.

Related to this was a strong sense of national purposiveness. *Agarēnennā negusēn tammrē iredālhu* ("Having studied, I will serve my country and my king")—this was the motto of most Ethiopian students in the forties and fifties. The conspicuous needs of their country provided clear goals in terms of which students felt they were preparing themselves.

Still another motive force was the need for personal justification. The many students who in a sense deserted their home villages or families in order to spend years in school carried with them an ambition eventually to show the folks back home that they were right after all. This involved the conviction that going to school was the right, at times the righteous, thing: a blind faith that simply by continuing along the road of education they would make good in the world and return home some day as a sort of hero. Here, too, is an echo of the old deviant pattern: the renegade returning home, after many years, as a successful churchman or warlord.

The economic situation, finally, was encouraging for students. It seemed for many years that advanced training, including study abroad, would be available for whoever qualified, and that the demand for educated personnel was so great that the job opportunities for students would be endless.

By 1961, however, all these sources of adolescent morale—royal legitimation, national purpose, personal justification, and economic opportunity—had been to some extent undercut. Some of the changing circumstances have already been referred to. The effect of the rebellion of December, 1960, and its aftermath was to weaken the tie between Haile Selassie and the post-elementary students. With his moral authority somewhat undermined, the students could no longer use him to symbolize a conflict-free transition to modernity. Nor could they any longer count on him to "supply everything" indefinitely: in the summer of 1962 the Emperor announced the immediate suspension of room and board benefits for the students of the University College.

The students' outlook has further been rendered less sanguine by the confusion attending the political crisis of the sixties. They no longer feel the keen sense of national purpose, to serve "country and king." Their ideals in this regard were already weakening before the rebellion by virtue of increased

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

5

THE OLD AND NEW ELITES

121 The disjunction between traditional and modernizing sectors that character-
170 izes the socialization of adolescents informs most aspects of contemporary
178 Ethiopian society. A modern institution of Western inspiration has nearly everywhere been superimposed upon traditional forms, and as yet there has been relatively little interaction between the two.

[433] In the economy, subsistence production according to traditional techniques prevails throughout all Amhara areas. Production for national and international markets is funneled through separate channels: coffee lands and a few tobacco farms in the southern provinces, specialized commerce in a dozen or so provincial centers, and a small number of factories dependent mainly on non-Ethiopian management and, frequently, capital. In the legal [671] realm varied forms of customary law remain authoritative for much provincial litigation, while civil, criminal, and maritime codes based on French and Swiss ideals have been enacted as the law of the nation. The governmental structure is similarly bifurcated, between local authorities who govern [64] in the traditional manner, albeit with reduced powers, and a ministerial system and parliament based on European models. In the case of religious [795] institutions there remains a wide gulf between the orientation of the Ortho- [794] dox churches and that of such Western-inspired formations as the Theological College and the Orthodox Students Association.

121 This sociological dualism comes to a head in the system of social stratifi-
56 cation.
178

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

178 565 661 So long as they remain loyal, the Emperor has tended to let members of the new nobility help themselves to the spoils of office. Some of them retain the view that public office is a private possession, a reward from the emperor rather than an obligation to the nation or people, and that it is, therefore, appropriate to use governmental position primarily to help one's relatives, inflate one's ego, and multiply one's wealth.

178 565 556 [241] [455] For the new nobility, however, wealth is no longer measured primarily in terms of land and cattle, but of money. If they own land, it is of interest chiefly as a source of income, and they tend to prefer using it for cash crops like coffee and *çhat* (a narcotic plant sold in quantities to Arabs) than for the traditional grains and pulse or for experimental crops. They prefer to speculate in real estate rather than to increase the output of their farmlands. Indeed, because of the heightened prestige of money, many officials have been grateful—or would be grateful—for the opportunity to leave government service and become entrepreneurs. They feel very close to that small number of Ethiopians outside the government who have acquired much wealth through commercial enterprise, and who may also be included in the status group of the new nobility.

178 565 556 472 [175] [648] Commercial entrepreneurs came into prominence on the Ethiopian scene in the 1920's, when monopolies in alcohol, matches, salt, and tobacco, as well as trade in coffee and skins, enabled a small number of Ethiopian families, Christian as well as Muslim, to accumulate wealth. Such people became prisoners of their wealth during the occupation, since they felt obliged to collaborate with the Italians in order to protect their privileges. Many more Ethiopians have profited from the modest economic activity in the country since the liberation, although most of Ethiopia's trade remains in the hands of Arabs, Greeks, and Armenians (at least nominally). Their social level approximates that of the higher government officials. They are expected to pay their respects at court along with the *makuännent* and *bäla-seltän*. They [662] are often related to high government officials, and attempt to make use of their relatives in office to help them secure commercial advantages. Above all, they share the same style of life.

178 565 369 177 [556] As an urban group, the new nobility enjoy a style of life notably different from that of their predecessors who lived on mountainous estates and in army tents. Even if assigned to provincial posts, members of the new nobility tend to maintain homes in Addis Ababa. They have been quick to incorporate the more conventional urban Western forms of conspicuous consumption. Automobiles and chauffeurs, expensive European clothes, modern houses, Scotch whiskey, and Western-style banquets and dances have become the common ingredients of their subculture.

178 565 554 At the same time, traditional symbols of prestige are still in evidence. The

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

178 631 64 565 program not supervised by the Emperor, since any official's budding projects tend to be undone by his successor, whether because of personal vendetta, orders from the Emperor himself, or simply difference of approach. Thus has Haile Selassie been able to make sure that no one besides himself demonstrates any sort of leadership that might be attractive to the public.

At the same time his appointments have been made in such a way as to insure a balance of power—or impotence—favorable to his absolute control. By consistently appointing enemies to adjacent positions he has built in checks upon the behavior and sentiments of his higher officials. He has relied on mutual jealousies and conflicting ambitions to cause each to report anything incriminating he can find on the other. When appointees in the same branch of government have shown undue co-operation and friendliness, he has at times provoked friction between them.

In addition to the checks and balances of the *shum-shĭr* system, the Emperor has made use of an extensive intelligence system to keep watch over those in office and out. Not only the operations of the regular security depart- [625] ments of the Ministry of Interior and the police, but also some of his closer advisers have had their own personal networks, financed by moneys diverted from various government departments.

178 565 656 472 Other measures have been used to check the independence of businessmen. Money has been arbitrarily taken from them by the imposition of fines, confiscation of property, and through requests for contributions for charitable causes. A few private entrepreneurs who have been too successful have been forced into government service. Licenses have been revoked, in some cases given to foreigners rather than to prosperous Ethiopians. Dividends from commercial enterprises have been withheld, or given to others whom the Emperor favored. (Rather than appear unduly wealthy, some Ethiopian investors have preferred to use Greeks, Armenians, and Arabs as the nominal heads of their enterprises.)

178 565 554 [177] [829] Due to their relative proximity to the Emperor, their patronage powers, their wealth, and in some cases their family background, the members of the new nobility command considerable deference, particularly in Addis Ababa. Their Westernized style of life (itself modeled to a great extent on the Emperor's habits) has set new standards for modernizing Ethiopia. At the same time they are the objects of much stereotyped hostility. The people in the country, and the commoners of the towns, regard them as oppressive and unsympathetic. Their logic often runs: "The big men around the court are no good; only the Emperor is for us." The intellectuals see them as reactionary, selfish, and corrupt. The massacre of some fifteen members of the new nobility as the final act of the abortive coup d'état in 1960 was an expression of this latter judgment.

178 565 643 652 The chief advantage of the new nobility—their relative enjoyment of im-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

Selassie I theater, and the secondary level art school.* Library facilities included the National Library, with some fifty thousand volumes; the University College Library, with about forty-five; and the reading rooms of the United States Information Service, the British Center, and the Soviet Information Service. The national library also contains a historical museum, and there is a handsome and well appointed archeological museum nearby, neither of which has so far been operated with a view to encouraging public attendance.

Except for occasional lectures sponsored by the national library and the University College extension program, none of the above institutions serves as a center for intellectual communication among adult Ethiopians. It was hoped by some that with the inauguration of the Haile Selassie I University, in December, 1961, a major new center of intellectual life would be created; but the government found it difficult to push ahead with its announced concept of an integrated institution which would operate autonomously and at a high standard.

Outside these institutions, moreover, there have been few channels of communication through which Ethiopian intellectuals can develop their minds and stimulate their imaginations. There are no periodicals to serve as a medium for such communication. One possibility, the *Ethiopian Observer,* is not quite an exception. Limited resources have kept it from operating at as high a level as available talent might permit, and its basically apologetic orientation renders implausible its claims to be "A Journal of Independent Opinion." The daily newspapers which feature contributed articles—the *Ethiopian Herald,* the *Addis Zaman,* and the Amharic sections of the *Voice of Ethiopia*—have tended to exclude pieces that have anything to do with highly controversial matters. Nor are there many social occasions for the serious discussion of intellectual matters. Professional associations, clubs devoted to intellectual matters, and even informal discussion groups exist not at all or else in a very haphazard form.

Contact with the intellectual world outside Ethiopia is almost as meager. Foreign-educated Ethiopians tend to become intellectually demoralized on returning home. The loss of a taste for reading has frequently been one of the first casualties experienced by Western-educated Ethiopians on return from abroad. Only a few hardy souls attempt to maintain some sort of link with the outside world, through subscribing to such magazines as the *New Statesman, Paris Soir,* or *New Republic.* For most of them, coming home means a cessation of the most elementary intellectual functions, other

* In 1963 an Institute of Ethiopian Studies was established at Haile Selassie I University, including a substantial Ethiopiana library and museum.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

phenomenon, however, the intellectuals are already unmistakably in evidence, and if one contrasts them as a social stratum with the new nobility their outlines become readily visible.

The new nobility came into being in consequence of Haile Selassie's policy of political *centralization*. The status of its members rests on their possession of political influence, measured partly by the strength of their personal followings but primarily by how close they are to the Emperor, and on the Westernized style of life made possible by wealth acquired through political office, rents, and commerce. Its ascendance as a status group may be located approximately in the decade after 1945, the year in which failure of a revolt in Tigre Province marked the end of attempts to assert provincial claims inspired by allegiance to members of the old nobility. The decade was marked by rapid growth of the factors supportive of centralized government and the new nobility: expansion of the bureaucracy, strengthening of the national military force, and economic advance.*

The intelligentsia, by contrast, has come into being in consequence of Haile Selassie's policy of technical *modernization*. The status of its members rests on their possession of secular Western education, status differences within the group depending on the academic degree attained and the prestige of the school attended. The development of the intelligentsia as a counter-elite has its beginnings in the present decade, beginning around 1955, the year of the jubilee celebration of the twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Emperor's coronation. This was a lavishly contrived affair which, occurring at about the time that the first sizable group of postwar college students had returned from abroad, accentuated in their minds a sense of alienation from the *ancien régime*. The present decade is marked by dramatic increase in the number of Ethiopians with college degrees and secondary school certificates, and in the general prestige of education as such in the country. For, it will be remembered, in the late forties the government found it necessary to pay families to get them to send their children to school; whereas by the late fifties, there were far too many applicants for the available places.

The pattern of recruitment of members of the new nobility has been continuous with important elements of the traditional social system. It rests on the belief in the sanctity of the emperor and the legitimacy of his unlimited political authority, and the practice of emperors sometimes to raise to high position men of low background who were *ipso facto* more trustworthy. The personnel of the new nobility, moreover, have in a number of cases been drawn from members of old noble families.

By contrast, the formation of the intelligentsia represents a break with the

* Due largely to trade in coffee, whose export value climbed more or less steadily from Eth$17 million in 1947 to Eth$123 million in 1957.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

past. The intellectuals are the product of a secular school system which is, as we have seen, a structure foreign to Abyssinian tradition. Their members are drawn from all parts of Ethiopian society, and in almost no cases consist of Western-educated members of the old group of literati, the *dabtarā*. The question of their integration into what has remained an essentially traditional social system has thus been Ethiopia's main sociological dilemma during the present decade. We shall return to this question after considering the composition and general situation of the intellectual class.

Whatever his line of work, the Ethiopian intellectual tends to be employed by the government, since employment opportunities in the private sector are still extremely limited; and where such exist, the government has often claimed priority over the intellectual's services by virtue of its having educated him. Many of the intellectuals work as public administrators, in the middle echelons of the government bureaucracy, with the titles of "assistant," "director," and "director general"; and there has been a growing tendency to appoint them in the higher levels, especially since 1961. Hundreds of them now work as teachers in the elementary and secondary schools,* and some six dozen teach at the college level. A small but growing number are employed as physicians, medical workers, engineers, and legal advisers in various government institutions. Still another group works in the small communications field—on the staffs of the various newspapers, the patriotic monthly *Menen,* and Radio Addis Ababa. The small group holding jobs outside the government works as engineers and bureaucrats in industrial firms, as employees of the Ethiopian Air Lines, or have small commercial or agricultural enterprises of their own.

With respect to interaction among the intellectuals, however, the most important distinction among them has been the place where they received their education. Here we may speak of two main groups: those who received part of their education abroad, the "foreign-educated" or "returnees"; and those who received all their education in Ethiopia, the "local-educated" or "locals."†

The Returnees

Close to two hundred Ethiopians studied abroad prior to the Italian occupation. Since French was then the official European language in Ethiopia,

---

* About forty-five hundred Ethiopians, of varying levels of educational attainment, were teaching in government schools of all types in 1960–61, according to the Ministry of Education school census for that year.

† This term is used as a neutral descriptive category, free from any negative connotations it may have acquired when first coined by the returnees. More recently, the West African term "been-to" has been incorporated into Amharic for referring to the returnee.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

quite a few of these men went to school in France and Switzerland, while others studied in Egypt, England, the United States, and Italy. In general, this first group of returnees was enthusiastic and outspoken in their desire to modernize the country. They were emboldened by the feeling that Haile Selassie was their champion, though some of them, who took plans for a Young Ethiopia movement with them into exile during the occupation, felt a need for more radical reforms than the Emperor was willing to admit.

The pre-occupation intellectuals have no significant voice as such in Ethiopia today. Many of them were massacred by the Italians following the attempt on Graziani's life in 1937. Those who survived have been scattered, some being so thoroughly absorbed in the new nobility as to lose their identity as intellectuals, others tending to lead somewhat isolated and demoralized lives. Only the handful of older military officers, who were trained at the St. Cyr Academy in France, retain any semblance of common identity based on prewar study abroad.

In speaking of the returnees, then, we speak essentially of a group whose education abroad dates to the late forties and after. The typical postliberation returnee has studied from three to five years abroad in an English-speaking institution, under the sponsorship of the Ethiopian government; though there are many exceptions to this type.

As of June, 1959, the main countries in which some five hundred Ethiopians had studied since the mid-forties were: United States and Canada, 38 per cent; United Kingdom, 20 per cent; Lebanon (American University of Beirut), 17 per cent; Western Germany, 10 per cent; and India, 4 per cent. This pattern began to change somewhat at the end of the fifties as, in addition to these countries, Ethiopians in increasingly large numbers began to attend schools in Egypt, Italy, France, Israel, and Sweden. The subjects pursued by these students covered the whole academic spectrum—from dairying and forestry to languages and theology. Most of them, however, concentrated in one of four fields: social sciences, 30 per cent; engineering, 23 per cent; education, 12 per cent; and medical sciences, 12 per cent. Notably underrepresented in their studies were the fields of business and the natural sciences.

The length of time spent abroad varied considerably. Of the three hundred students who had returned by 1958 for whom complete information is available, 15 per cent studied abroad for only one year and 18 per cent for two years; 36 per cent were abroad from three to five years, 25 per cent from six to eight years, and 6 per cent for nine or more years. The education of about half of these students was paid for by the Ethiopian government itself. Others went on scholarships given by the United States government through AID (20 per cent); by other foreign governments, chiefly West Germany and

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

India (10 per cent); and by international organizations, chiefly WHO and ICAO (8 per cent). The others were financed privately, either by their families (8 per cent), or, in a few cases (3 per cent), by religious groups or business firms.

Given this variety of educational background, it is not surprising that the experience of study abroad has had a variable effect on the returnees. Their images of modernity are differently colored according to the country where they have received their higher education. Their archetypes for the modern component of language vary according to the language in which they have received their technical training.

Despite such variety—which may ultimately serve to enrich their cultural life more than to fragment it—several effects of the experience abroad appear common to nearly all the returnees. These include a radical broadening of perspective; the taste for a high standard of living; greater appreciation of political freedom; a heightened sense of Ethiopian identity; and an increase in nationalistic sentiment.

Because Ethiopian students are highly motivated to learn what goes on about them in foreign countries, their travel abroad has tended to broaden their outlooks rather than to confirm their prejudices. This expansion of perspective alters their attitude toward Ethiopia in two different ways. On the one hand, by enabling them to evaluate aspects of Ethiopian life they had previously taken for granted, it has made them more aggressively critical about conditions at home. On the other hand, it has given them a greater sense of pride about Ethiopia. They have noticed that, however advanced their host country, it had certain shortcomings of its own, a sort of observation which has tended to ease the sting of cultural inferiority inevitably felt during the stay in a more modernized society.

> Before going to the United States, I pictured it as the most perfect country on earth. We students in Ethiopia believed that everything good and beautiful comes from America. After studying there, I was disappointed in many ways. For example, I found the Americans to be hypocritical—they go to church, and don't care about religion; they talk about tolerance, and are still quite prejudiced. This was a great lesson for me. I can never be so romantic about a foreign country again, and can appreciate Ethiopia's strengths as well as its weaknesses better now.

Short travel tours sometimes had a similar effect:

> I spent several weeks in Yugoslavia. . . . And I must say—despite how backward we are here, we live much more happily than the Yugoslavs. The people themselves are wonderful—warm and generous; but their lives are miserable. That experience was really quite a surprise for me.

No matter what its shortcomings, the host country inevitably accustomed Ethiopians abroad to a higher standard of living than they had known at

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

home—except for the difficulty of having to do without servants. Those students whose rural background and limited intellectual experience had led them to consider Addis Ababa as one of the most advanced cities in the world were often shocked by the comparison. No less shocking was the moral climate, which permitted one to express oneself freely and honestly. The taste for intellectual freedom was added to that of political freedom, as students whose horizons were limited by the meager intellectual fare at home came into hungry contact with authors like Marx and Freud, Dewey and Russell.

However much the Ethiopian students abroad might seek to lose themselves in the host culture, they were not permitted to do so. In the mirror of foreigners' regards, their identity as Ethiopians took clearer shape, transcending narrower tribal identifications. Questions about Ethiopia by foreigners aroused greater interest in Ethiopia's history and contemporary problems. A number of students were thus moved to dip into the literature on their country produced by travelers and scholars in the past, and some of them came to write theses and dissertations on problems related to Ethiopia's development.

All of these factors—broadening of perspective, acquaintance with a higher economic standard, less inhibited discussions, and greater self-consciousness as Ethiopians—contributed to a spirit of nationalist dedication. This spirit was confirmed or aroused in all but two groups of the returnees. One, consisting of children of some wealthy members of the new nobility, went abroad chiefly for the prestige and pleasure involved. For them the experience was an extended holiday; they were playboys more than students. The other group consists of those who were abroad for too short a time to have a complete educational experience—in some cases, for as little as three months. These students have tended to use the tour abroad chiefly as a weapon with which to lord it over their peers on return and otherwise to serve narrow personal ambitions. Those students, however, for whom study abroad entailed a more or less serious encounter with higher education and a more modernized culture normally experienced a swelling aspiration to serve their country. They returned home deeply critical of the status quo and determined to contribute substantially to the modernization of their society.

Ostensibly, the returnees have been well situated for making such a contribution. Thanks to prudent government policy since the early fifties, they have been enabled to enjoy a minimally comfortable standard of living. Given a monthly allowance from the moment they step off the plane, they have been automatically salaried at a scale based largely on the academic degree attained, with A.B.'s starting at Eth$450 a month and Ph.D.'s at Eth$700. In addition, provisions have been made for them to borrow money from the government in order to finance heavy investments like furniture or, more usually, an automobile.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

furniture, etc.—are equally burdensome investments if the returnee does not possess them. Furthermore, the traditional large wedding is still expected in most cases. In the city this involves an enormous expense—as much as Eth$2,000–$4,000—which often puts the groom in debt for several years.*

There are many returnees for whom these factors are excuses more than insuperable obstacles, or who frankly prefer the extended bachelordom made possible by the greater freedom of the modernizing sector to an uncertain match. If, as frequently is the case, they would marry only an educated wife, they may be discouraged by the shortage of educated Ethiopian women; or beset by too much pride, if coming from a humble background, to ask for the hand of an educated girl who is likely to come from an upper-class family. They may be victims of the cycle of antagonism that has developed between educated men and women in Ethiopia, the former attacking the latter for demanding too much in the way of material things and being only superficially modernized—"half-baked"—and the latter indicting the former for preferring foreign girls and unjustly neglecting Ethiopian women.

But the root of the problem is often deeper (leaving aside, for this discussion, characterological factors). It is entwined with a basic insecurity about the whole idea of marriage in the transitional atmosphere of contemporary Ethiopia. Perhaps nowhere in the minds of the returnees do traditional and modern norms stand in such delicate counterpoise as with regard to the question of the sort of wife one should marry and the proper type of relation to have with her. Should he prefer the traditional woman, modestly dressed and inconspicuous, or the Western ideal of a sexually attractive female? Should he have a wife who stays at home all the time, or one whom he takes along to social gatherings? Should he have a wife with whom to share interests and discuss problems, or one to order about and keep in her place? The returnees have normally been attracted by the Western marriage pattern while abroad, but it is so out of place in the Ethiopian context that many are troubled by the prospect on return. The foreign-educated man feels he should have an educated wife, but he also feels threatened by a woman who is independent, especially if she is holding a job. Such ambivalence adds an additional dimension of vulnerability to the returnee's position.

In sum: the conditions of life receptive to a modernizing intellectual stratum have not yet been established in Ethiopia. The personal frustrations of the returnees are an inevitable consequence of their being the bearers of modern culture in a traditional oligarchical order—especially one that has

* A new custom has developed in response to this problem. It has become the practice in some offices for sheets of paper to be circulated prior to a wedding in the ministry or agency where the groom is employed. Co-workers write the amount they wish to be deducted from their salaries in their behalf. Most recently, modest weddings have started to become respectable.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

been affected by modernizing agents for but a relatively brief period and in a relatively diluted fashion. The beliefs and values which the returnees acquired while abroad concern national development, technical competence, and individuality, while the norms of the social structure in which they must live are based on the values of loyalty to monarch, ascribed status, and authoritarian relations.

Of many possible types of response to such a situation of strain, four are common among the Ethiopian intelligentsia. These we may designate by the terms Opportunism, Withdrawal, Reformism, and Rebellion. With reference to the three variables of commitment to modern goals and norms, acceptance of existing authorities, and the distinction between "activity" and "passivity," these patterns may be represented schematically as in Table 14.[59]

TABLE 14

MODES OF ADAPTATION OF ETHIOPIAN RETURNEES

	Commitment to Modern Values	Acceptance of Existing Authorities	"Activity"
Opportunism	−	+	+
Withdrawal	+	−	−
Reformism	+	+	+
Rebellion	+	−	+

Opportunism is the mode of adaptation in which the returnee's commitment to modern goals and norms is eclipsed by his passion for status, power, and income. He differs from the traditional aspirant for high position in Abyssinia in that two of his status qualifications are novel—residence abroad, and a university degree—and above all in that the pursuit of his personal goals entails a ***renunciation*** of nationalistic ideals and universalistic standards which were nurtured while abroad. For some opportunists this is no real problem: their study abroad was all along essentially a façade to be used in advancing their careers. But for the others the process of becoming an opportunist is a gradual one and attended by chronic self-recriminations, as the returnee finds himself compulsively agreeing with his superiors and flattering them on every occasion, and performing actions primarily for the sake of advancement rather than for the sake of doing a job well.

> It is impossible to go on pursuing progressive principles indiscriminately. I sometimes see my friends doing things now which we used to condemn

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

when we were students abroad together. I wonder at times if I am losing sight of my principles altogether.

121
571
178
177
156

Withdrawal is the solution of those who have retained their principles at the expense of being effectual in action. The routes of escape are varied. One way is transferring attention to problems outside the country—to international relations, problems of pan-Africanism, or the gossip about London, Paris, and New York.

To me the independence of all African nations is more important than the progress of Ethiopia.

Some spend their energies in convivial relations with resident Westerners (diplomatic and technical assistance personnel, foreign businessmen) or in the traditional rounds of family visiting. Quite a few returnees lose themselves in card-playing or chess whenever they can, and a number have taken to heavy drinking. Often the returnee who withdraws shows no "symptoms" other than a general constriction of his life into narrow work routines and creature functions. At the same time he may be experiencing a fairly acute sense of estrangement.

Our generation is not really living. We are not "engaged." The simple weaver—most of the people in this country—are "engaged." We are not; we live from day to day. When I leave work I go to the Ras Hotel or somewhere else. I don't want to go home, there is nothing there for me. I have nothing to work for. I have no family, nor any interest in saving money.

The third type of response, Reformism, involves the attempt both to maintain principles and to be effective in action under the existing political order. This alternative places great demands on the personality system and might well be designated as the pattern of "moral heroism."

What we lack today is proper organization. In default of organization, we are forced to rely on morality.

The reformist returnee serves his country according to universalistic standards even though these norms are scarcely institutionalized; even though, in other words, he is likely to be criticized and even punished for maintaining standards in the face of demands by superiors and relatives to do otherwise, or for solving problems in a rational manner on his own initiative. Yet if he is officially disregarded or censured, his efforts do not go unnoticed by the patriotic modernizing elements of the population who, in a covert, informal system of communication, tend to establish severe judgments on the "bad guys" and the "good guys," and to idolize the latter as potential leaders.

In the case of Rebellion, finally, the attempt is made to be active in the pursuit of modern goals but in a spirit of basic alienation from the existing

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

121 authorities. Except for a very few eccentric individuals who have seemed
571 oblivious to the dangers of speaking out their criticism of the status quo in
177 public, this has in the nature of current circumstances necessarily involved
178 clandestine activity. Returnees have been involved in small conspiratorial
156 groups since the mid-fifties. The December, 1960, coup d'état has been the
[669] most ambitious rebellious project to be acted out so far. Similarly motivated
[668] activities have included the duplication and distribution of subversive literature, and the formation of small groups as groundwork for an eventual political party.

Our data do not permit reliable estimates of the frequency of these different modes of adaptation among the returnees. It is important to note, however, that individuals often change from one mode to another in the course of their experience after return and that many follow more than one pattern at the same time. It is unlikely that the total number of returnees oriented primarily as rebels has ever exceeded two per cent. Most of them move in and out of phases of Reformism, Withdrawal, and Opportunism, depending to a large extent on the accidents of their appointments. A more concrete picture of their experience may be suggested by the following case study, that of a Western-educated Ethiopian who went from a phase of Withdrawal to one of Reformism tinged with Opportunism.

121
571 The Adjustment of "Haile": Case Study of a Returnee
159
156

October, 1958. Haile has recently returned from four years of study in a Western country. He speaks very critically about the state of things in Ethiopia. He is particularly upset by the prevailing inefficiency, the lack of industriousness, and the interminable procrastination (*ǐshi naga*).

January, 1959. Haile seems deeply depressed. The ministry in which he has been placed affords him no opportunity to work effectively and the job he has bears no relation to what he was trained for. He has withdrawn more into himself, but to all outward appearances plays perfectly well, with great self-assurance, the role of the Amhara bureaucrat.

July, 1959. Now Haile is working in a different ministry, in a job somewhat more closely related to his training. He appears to feel productive and useful now, and his criticism is constructive. For example, he frequently compares the situation in the United States and Ethiopia, to show how the same sort of problem can be solved more readily in the U.S. because of its greater facilities. Though Ethiopia's comparative handicaps frustrate him, he talks of plans for the development of Ethiopia with some enthusiasm. . . . Haile complains of an

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

brothels for dancing and more intimate relations. (Returnees normally do not have patience for the shy, traditional girls; and they are too concerned about public opinion to be seen visiting brothels. When they or the locals do visit the brothels, it is often by way of a backdoor entrance.) When they marry, the locals almost invariably choose a traditional type of wife with relatively little education and with whom they expect to have an authoritarian relationship.

In sum: the local is not so afflicted by those problems which derive from the central dilemma of the returnee—how to fulfil himself according to modern standards in an intractable, traditional environment. The local's dilemma typically lies in a different realm, that of economic and social mobility. Whereas the returnee has been given a comparatively high income and status almost as a matter of course, the local has normally started his work life with a relatively low salary and little prestige. If the returnee has felt deprived relative to the Westerners in whose society he has lived, the local has felt deprived relative to the returnee.

The local lives on a day-to-day basis at a relatively simple standard. Though he shares the returnee's passion for woolen suits and, in many cases, for a car of his own, he is not, like the returnee, preoccupied with the quest for housing that conforms to Western standards. Except for those with extraordinary talents and family connections, the locals have had difficulty locating jobs that they feel are not beneath their dignity and which pay salaries sufficient to cover their relatively modest needs. They customarily receive a starting salary in the neighborhood of Eth$150. The more ambitious and fortunate among them have, by changing jobs, manipulating superiors, and improving skills, worked their way up to salaries in the Eth$400-$500 category. Some have become provincial teachers for a while, in order to accumulate money on which to live while shopping for a position in Addis Ababa and with which to influence some higher official to grant it to them. There remains a hard core of locals who feel they are underpaid and live in constant resentment of this situation.

This resentment has produced a general sort of negativism which characterizes many of the locals, a negativism expressed in the form of backbiting and denunciation of the higher government officials and the nobility generally. They decry social injustice and the uses of nepotism. They moralize profusely against those whom fortune has shown greater favors. But not all their social criticism is born of resentment. There are also among the locals many young men who are comfortably situated but fired by patriotic fervor with a desire for social reform.

The local is as deeply concerned about asserting his status vis-à-vis the less educated as he is to advance his position in the hierarchy. Locals are extreme-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

The effect of this literature has not been, as David Riesman suggests is true of the written word generally, an individualizing one. It did not serve to "help liberate the reader from his group and its emotions, and allow the contemplation of alternative responses and the trying on of new emotions."[81] It has served rather to buttress conformity, by rekindling identification with the sacred symbols of the society. Ethiopian religious literature does not invite introspection; it is a corpus to be venerated and solemnly rehearsed. When a devout Ethiopian reads his daily or weekly portion from some writing such as the *Dāwit* (Psalms of David) or the *Weddāssē Māryām* (*Praise of Mary*), he is said to be "repeating" the text—*Dāwit yedaggemāl*. Most of those who learn to read the words of these writings do not understand the Ge'ez in which they are composed.

A similar function has been performed by the secular literature, which runs primarily in praise of royalty and thus has served to uphold the political status quo. The earliest Ethiopian writings are inscriptions of the Aksumite kings dating from the fourth century A.D. Here, in a style that is to persist through the ages, the royal deeds are recounted in meticulous detail and endowed with the highest morality.[82] Ge'ez chronicles were composed in this manner for most of the emperors after the thirteenth century. The earliest specimens of written Amharic consist of hymns in praise of the Emperor Amde Ṣeyon (1314–44).

Two other written works put the capstone on this conservative structure. The *Kebra Nagast*, the Ethiopian national epic, has served chiefly to legitimate the royal line that came to power in the thirteenth century and to cement once and for all the union of monarchy and church. The *Fetha Nagast*, the traditional legal code based on various canon and civil laws compiled in medieval Egypt, has served not as a working code for the adjudication of court cases but as an embellishment of *de facto* decisions, imparting to the judge an increment of authority by virtue of his ritual of referring to them.

Because of the relative sterility of Abyssinian written literature, art, dance, and music, many observers have concluded that Abyssinian culture provides no outlets for truly creative expression.[83] This judgment is not just. The Abyssinian genius freely discloses itself in the stories, verse, and proverbs that make up its very rich *oral* literature. Within this oral tradition, especially in its verse, a good deal of original expression and personalized commentary may be found.

Ethiopic verse comprises a wide variety of forms which differ according to subject and occasion. Classical *qenē*, Ge'ez verse in praise of some holy figure or political leader, is composed by *dabtarā* on certain religious or political holidays. More playful verses of praise are sung in Amharic by *dabtarā* or minstrels on festive occasions. In such verses the poet may in-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

objects of manipulation, their own creative energies will go unused. Only when their personal aspirations can be linked with co-operative endeavors or collective projects will their participation be sufficiently motivated to draw forth new sources of energy.

The traditional approach, moreover, does not take into acount the available intelligence of the population. It neither takes advantage of the understanding of immediate problems possessed by those concerned nor responds to their pressing needs and interests. The result is failure to make improvements in areas ripe for change, and antagonism or frustration of the elements of the population involved.

Given the relative ineffectuality and unresponsiveness of traditional methods of mobilization, and the new demands for concerted action unleashed by the process of urbanization and the growth of modern aspirations, it is natural that new forms of association should emerge to fill the sociological vacuum. That these new associations have been late in coming merely reflects the tenacity of traditional habits and institutions, as well as the reluctance of the government to permit the formation of groups which might have any sort of political or parapolitical ambitions. But during the past decade, and particularly since the rebellion of December, 1960, a variety of novel associational forms have come into being or have significantly diffused throughout the country. These associations may be described under three general categories: (1) formal associations of indigenous inspiration, (2) formal associations of foreign inspiration, and (3) informal associations.

Formal Associations of Indigenous Inspiration

Eddīr.—Probably the oldest and most widely diffused of the modern associations in Ethiopia, the *eddīr* is a form of welfare institution. Its functions are primarily to help defray the cost of funerals; to assist families in the event of the death, illness, unemployment, or imprisonment of their breadwinners; and to help in the case of loss due to fire. Members of an *eddīr* are obliged to contribute to a common fund and to attend the funerals of other members. (Twenty-five cents a month is not an uncommon payment, although in rural centers the contributions are often solicited only in time of need.) The institution is said to have originated among the Gurage and to have become more widely adopted during the Italian invasion, when many people who were killed had no relatives to bury them. Since then *eddīr* have been established in towns all over the country, fulfilling the vital functions which were performed by kin in the traditional countryside. They are organized on a territorial basis, in villages, towns, and city quarters; on an ethnic basis, as among the Dorze and Wollamo peoples; and even on an institutional basis, as among the employees of some government ministries. Often considerable moral pressure is exerted on townsfolk to become members—the threat of having no one

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

749 178 come to one's funeral is particularly potent—and the transactions of the *eddīr* are strictly governed by elected officers.[39]

454 178 [571] *Equb.*—The *equb* is a form of savings association in which weekly or monthly payments of a fixed sum are exchanged for the privilege of receiving a large lump sum at some point in the life of the group. In addition to providing a means of forced saving, the *equb* offers a basis for sociability when the members come together to make their payments and are provided with food and drink. Like the *eddīr*, the *equb* is believed to have originated among the [177] Gurage, and acquired wider popularity following the Italian invasion when many people needed large sums of money for rebuilding homes and purchasing livestock. The mode of operation of an *equb* has been described in the *Ethiopian Observer* as follows:

> A person desiring to start an Iqub will discuss the matter with his friends; if they agree a meeting will be called to discuss the rules and regulations of the proposed new society, and in particular the amount of money to be paid by each member, the frequency of payment and the time and place of meeting. A president, or dagna [literally, "judge"], and a money collector will be elected from among the most respected and reliable members of the group.
>
> The President then asks every member to bring one or two guarantors who will be responsible for payment in case of default for whatever reason it may be.
>
> On the appointed day all the members assemble and the secretary will call the roll. Any member unable to attend is expected to send his subscription in time. The specified sum is then handed by every member (or substitute) to the President. Any latecomer will be fined according to a pre-arranged schedule, this money being kept by the President until the end of the Iqub, when it is used for the common enjoyment of the members. The collected funds are drawn by lot, the winner receiving the total subscription of all the members. The lottery is normally effected by the members writing their names on small pieces of paper which are then placed in a hat, a blind-folded non-member then drawing out the name of the winner.
>
> After each draw, the winner is disqualified from taking part in further lotteries, but continues to pay his fee until every member has drawn his share. If he fails in this duty his guarantors have to pay.
>
> When all at length have been rewarded the time has come to set up a new Iqub.[40]

Equb have been established by members of virtually all low- and middle-income groups—clerks, merchants, servants, peasants, policemen. Their rapid increase, in response to the growing importance of money in Ethiopia's econ-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

omy during the past two decades, represents a significant growth of the capacity for voluntary formal organization in the modernizing sector.[41]

Māhebar (*Regional Associations*).—A type of formal association which has sprung up in Addis Ababa in recent years, becoming popular for the first time around 1960, is known as the *māhebar*. While its name is taken from the traditional Orthodox fraternal association, in aims and organization it is different from the religious *māhebar*. While the latter is devoted to honoring one of the saints and is convened primarily for feasting and sociability, the modern *māhebar* is organized on the basis of territorial or tribal bonds and is concerned with problems of social betterment. The first *māhebar* of this kind was established by the Gurage in the fifties.* Thereafter, the idea spread to members of other groups, and Addis Ababa residents originating in Gondar, Tigre, Harar, Manz, Tagulat, Fitche and elsewhere began to form *māhebar* of their own. The basic idea behind all these *māhebar* is to make some contribution to the welfare of the provinces through projects voluntarily financed and organized by fellow-countrymen living in the metropolis. These projects have included construction of roads, schools, and hospitals; supplying books for schools; and provision of facilities for assisting inhabitants of the provinces who come to the city. Members of the various *māhebar* convene weekly or biweekly, usually on Sunday in the vicinity of one or another of the Addis Ababa churches, to discuss their projects and make their financial contributions.

Formal Associations of Foreign Inspiration

Student Associations.—The Orthodox Students Association was founded in 1958 by a convention representing all the colleges and some of the secondary schools. Its successful establishment was due in large part to the efforts of an Indian Orthodox minister who at the time was one of the Emperor's private secretaries. There is some evidence that an earlier spontaneous effort to form such a group in the early fifties was checked by the government. Members of this association have been concerned with adapting the activities of the church to contemporary needs. They criticize the established church for its use of a dead language, excessive ritualism, and lack of teaching; and have proposed that the Orthodox Church should institute Sunday schools and

* The Gurage *māhebar* remains in a class of its own, with respect to size, wealth, and ambitiousness of program. The Gurage have also pointed the way to using the *māhebar* form in a way that transcends the narrow tribal or territorial passions which it has thus far tended to canalize. This has been done through the establishment of another, project-oriented *māhebar* concerned solely with building a road from Alam Gana to Wollamo Soddo, whose membership includes Galla and Wollamo as well as Gurage. This association has already collected well over a million dollars, and has completed the construction of a bridge. It is headed by a capable Gurage army general and its activities and collections are reported regularly in the Addis Ababa press.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

cultivate a missionary spirit in order to reach the non-Christian peoples of Ethiopia. The association sponsors weekly religious services, featuring hymns in Amharic and talks in Amharic on religious and moral questions, and publishes a monthly journal. The Orthodox Students Association stands out as the first nationwide voluntary association in Ethiopia. It holds an annual convention which draws some three hundred students from all parts of the country.

The Ethiopian College Students Association was established in 1960 after some years of patient maneuvering by officers of the various college student governments. It attempts to represent the interests and needs of students vis-à-vis the government and to handle relations with international student organizations.

A number of student clubs have appeared from time to time within the framework of the colleges. One of the most popular and productive of these has been the Ethnological Society of the University College, founded in the early fifties by a Polish member of the college staff. Over the years it has produced several issues of an ethnological bulletin. More recently, under the framework of the new university, dramatic and choral groups have been established as well as groups like the Education Students Association and the Economics Students Association. Graduates of some of the secondary schools and colleges, moreover, have formed a small number of alumni associations.

Labor Unions.—Although Ethiopia has for some time been a paying member of the ILO, the government has until recently strongly opposed the establishment of unions in the country. Nevertheless, due to the encouragement of labor representatives from Western and other African countries, as well as to the courageous efforts of a number of Ethiopians, several unions have at last been established and have won some degree of recognition from the government.* Trade unions were first attempted among employees of the Franco-Ethiopian Railroad and in Eritrea.[42] They now include employees of a number of factories. Even household servants have formed associations that establish minimal conditions which members are obliged to demand from their employers.

Professional Associations.—The Ethiopian Teachers Association, with a large paper membership but scarcely any activity, was the only professional association in Ethiopia prior to the 1960 rebellion. If one may generalize from the frustrated attempts of Ethiopian doctors to establish a medical association, it would seem that the government was attempting to discourage groups of this sort as well as trade unions. Since 1961, however, the picture has changed. There now exists not only a medical association, which publishes its own

* A law establishing a legal basis for labor unions was enacted by the Ethiopian parliament in 1962.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

journal, but also an engineers' association, a college teachers' association, and an Ethiopian writers' association. Earlier attempts to establish an organization of lawyers have not yet reached fruition.

National and International Service Organizations.—A final group of formal associations consists of those which include non-Ethiopian nationals as well as Ethiopians in their membership and which carry out welfare services of various sorts. The Ethiopian Red Cross, the Ethiopian Women's Welfare Association, the YMCA, and the Rotary Club of Addis Ababa have been active for more than a decade. More recently, the International Christian Fellowship was formed with an eye to discussing ways of translating Christian principles into social action, and the Social Service Society has broken new ground in the welfare field with its ambitious program of relocating and rehabilitating Addis Ababa indigents.

Informal Associations

Another significant sociological development since the 1960 rebellion has been the blossoming of what might be called "mutual confidence groups." Although the public climate remains somewhat tense and generalized suspicion still prevails, a step has been taken away from the complete atomism of the pre-rebellion era. These groups consist of numbers of friends, bound by such factors as kinship, common ethnic background, relationships formed during study abroad, and occupational ties. Perhaps the most important single bond underlying these groups derives from friendships formed during the crucial experience of attending secondary school together. While for the most part these groups carry out no organized activities or structured discussions, they do provide a context in which any of the issues of the day can be discussed with fairly complete frankness and without fear of reprisal.

There are some progressive Ethiopians who would like to see these groups become the nuclei of action groups and political parties, even on an overt basis. The prevailing view among them, however, seems to be that this is as far as they can go under the present regime.

The efflorescence of voluntary associations in Ethiopia during the past half dozen years constitutes a remarkable thickening of the fabric of Ethiopian society. It may be seen as a vast, unconscious process of arousing and co-ordinating energies to meet the novel realities of Ethiopia's current historical situation. What relationship to this collective process have the individualistic features of Amhara character and society which were discussed above?

It may be observed that in virtually none of the cases cited above were the Amhara the initiators of the associational forms in question. The territorial and "project" *māhebar* were introduced into Ethiopian life by the Gurage; so, as far as present evidence indicates, were the *eddīr* and the *equb*. The labor

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

The labor movement, limited as it is, has been in the hands of Eritreans on the one hand, and primarily non-Amhara workers in the south. Student associations have been formed chiefly at the instigation and under the aegis of foreign staff members; though here, as with the professional associations, modernized Amhara have sometimes played a leading role.

Once the new associations had been introduced, the Amhara like other Ethiopians were quick to adopt and expand them. Their participation in these new associations, however, has been affected, as might be expected, by the intrusion of traditional behavior patterns. Three examples of such behavior patterns come readily to mind.

(1) While the *equb* is conceived as a kind of credit union and as a focus for communal sociability, the *co-operative* sentiment tends to be lacking among members of Amhara *equb*, at least those of which the author has any knowledge. For example, in case of dire need, an *equb* member who desires the lump sum out of turn may be forced to *buy* the amount from the weekly winner, sometimes by forfeiting as much as ten or twenty per cent of the amount. By capitalizing on the crises of others, some enterprising *equb* members are able to sell their successful claims several times. Furthermore, in the early years of their existence, *equb* were frequently faced with the problem created by members who won the money early in the cycle, left town with the money, and did not return to pay their later installments. This difficulty has been met to some extent by the requirement of securing one or two guarantors for each person who enters an *equb*, but problems of this nature have led to altercations that have brought many *equb* members into court.

(2) The behavior of members of Amhara territorial *māhebar* is essentially that of a traditional social or civil gathering. The big men are seated in places of honor; the rest of the people stand quietly by. After a protracted period of exchanging greetings and milling about, the crowd listens respectfully while one or more of the big men makes a statement, and perhaps exchanges a few words with the group's secretary; and then the gathering disbands. Although the *māhebar* is organized with respect to the attainment of specific goals, the substance of the meetings is instumental to a very slight degree. The assembly rarely involves a meeting of minds to discuss an issue or a common problem, or to work out a program of action; but exists primarily as an occasion for the resonance of primordial sentiments by virtue of shared territorial attachments.

(3) In all associations, finally, certain traditional characteristics which are incongruent with the optimum conduct of groups come to the fore. This is no less true of the modern-educated than of the traditionals. Members fail to come on time to arranged meetings or neglect to come altogether.* They

* The *equb* has attempted to check this pattern by imposing fines on members who come late.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

17 peoples who penetrated deep into the highlands, making many converts among the Christians. Even after the defeat of the Muslim armies in the sixteenth century and the subsequent rennaisance of the Ethiopian polity, relations with the Islamic world persisted, augmented now by the presence of Abyssinian Muslims permanently settled in the highlands.

*755 Within the context of Ethiopian medicine, these
*787 widespread cultural affinities are most obvious in the
*793 works of the cleric healer (the debtera), and in the
• 177 practices of the zar possession cult. For example, in their numerological operations, the debtera's divinatory texts repeat the gematria manipulations of the Kabbalah, while the ideology which rationalized these formulations clearly reiterates the astrological lore of Islamic sa-
177 vants. Similarly, affinities are obvious between Ethio-
778 pian and Islamic amulets, in their construction, in the design of talismanic devices, and in the ends for which
*757 they are manufactured. Nor is evidence of the transla-
177 tion of Islamic medical treatises into Ge'ez and Amharic
539 lacking. Here, however, these works, particularly regarding humoral theory, have enjoyed only a very limited diffusion, and have been subordinated to indigenous medi-
*787 cal notions. Finally, the zar cult, in whose coteries many of Begemder's women belong, is no local phenomenon, but appears in one form or another throughout this entire culture area.

capable of rendering bone and jimat supple enough to be manipulated into their appropriate positions. It is important that the bone be set precisely, for if improperly aligned it will stretch the jimat and cause them to twist once more, bringing a recurrence of the original symptoms.

[413] If palpation or visual inspection indicate that
• [177] the bone has splintered, an incision is made over the break and the splinters are removed with an instrument specially brought for this purpose. These instruments are of European manufacture and exotic by local standards, ranging from cosmetic tweezers to surgical forceps. After the bone has been set and the jimat moved into their proper relationships, a wooden splint is secured over the fracture and is tied with strips of toga cloth.

*[757] When an incision is made, an herbal poultice is
*[278] placed over the cut and wrapped beneath the splint, as
*[192] a precaution against subsequent infection (kusil). Every tagañ owns a recipe for an unguent, and the medicaments used in it are kept a professional secret. However, not all tagañs have recipes for kusil prophylaxis. Without the latter, a tagañ who wishes to treat compound fractures must obtain the services of an herbalist whose specialty is the treatment of kusil. Similarly the tagañ who is able to treat compound fractures

+759
752
768

needs.[1]

* 759 The wogeysa's remaining therapies---excision of
+753 tonsils (ankar) and teeth---are characterized by simpler
752 diagnosis and treatment than are the tagañ's works.
[843] Swollen and inflamed tonsils (komahaw) may be caused by
* [192] gerifta; in infants, however, the condition may be congenital, brought on by the over-exertions of the child's mother during pregnancy. It is considered a potentially mortal affliction, since the sickman is unable to swollow and loses weight rapidly; eventually the organ bursts and death follows. Tonsils are excised with the assistance of a reed through which a loop of horse
[413] hair has been slipped. With this, the offending organ
• [199] is held fast, and excised by whatever type of blade the therapist regards as most efficacious (e.g., a razor, imported 'Arab' knife, or fragment of glass).[2] Kusil

[1]During 1966, the foremost tagañ of Begemder had the following sickmen living simultaneously in three huts which he had erected on his fields; 1) a woman from Woggera (see map 1), with a fractured clavicle, assisted by her daughter; 2) a four year old boy, with a shoulder injury, accompanied by both parents; 3) a woman with a broken fore-arm, from Belsea, assisted by a locally acquired servant; 4) a woman from Tigre, with an immobile right arm, assisted by a locally acquired servant.

[2]In the Gondar area, both tonsils and uvula are classified as 'ankar'. Elsewhere in Begemder, they are often distinguished as 'ankar' and 'intil'. Therapeutically, diseased tonsils and uvula are treated the same, and a wogeysa capable of treating one invariably treats the other.

is considered a potential, but not immediate danger following excision. If an ankar korac ("tonsil cutter") is also a kusil herbalist, he may smear a prophylactic unguent over the face of the excision, but prophylaxis is not generally given. Even when kusil does occur (the syndrome known as yiankar mokusil), it is expected to regress either without any treatment, or by benefit of a commonly known herbal infusion. A young child is considered too small and frail to endure this operation and the subsequent period of increased vulnerability to gerifta and kusil. In such cases, the child is given a palliative to drink; in addition, a portion of the ingredients used in the drink is prepared as an unguent, and rubbed onto the affected area, against that time when the child will be old enough to withstand the operation.

The dental wogeyša is known as a "yiters medhaniyt awlakiy". As with other wogeyša-treated ailments, toothache can be traced to multiple causes, whose identification is only marginally important to the practitioner. Toothache is caused either by sun-borne gerifta or by an intrusive worm whose presence is made apparent by the caries it bores out. The ultimate and most successful therapy of the yiters medhaniyt awlakiy is extraction, with the use of European dental pliers. Because of the pain associated with this operation, laymen often

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

*767
743
• 177

A government hospital, located on the edge of Gondar provides the most important non-traditional therapies. Most townsfolk regard hospital therapy with considerable apprehension, because of its strangeness and of numerous apochryphal tales describing its therapies. Nevertheless, the Amhara does not dispute the power of Western medicine, at least regarding some ailments. This respect is largely explained by the demonstrated successes of western medicine, and the fact that, operationally, it coincides with certain traditional notions of what powerful therpies should be like. In particular, the violent introjective mode associated with the most commonly experienced of hospital therapies, merify (injection), is regarded as consistent with notions of strong therapies. Moreover, the practitioner of Western medicine, like powerful traditional healers, is characterized by a general mastery over an extensive disease domain, through abstruse sources of power. Western therapy is not in general well integrated into traditional medical beliefs, but tends to be considered mainly from a pragnatic perspective. Thus, hospital therapy is a likely choice for ailments against which it has repeatedly demonstrated successful cures and against which traditional healers are predictably less successful. Conspicuous here are abscesses, ulcerations, and other superficial but potentially serious infections,

*757
177
178

*(192)

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

known as kusil and ibac. In addition, Western therapy is sought for ailments which are serious and chronic, but for which traditional cures offer a poor prognosis or only palliatives. For these ailments (in particular, leprosy, kuntina; chronic coughing, yisaal basiyta, including tuberculosis, yilib basiyta; and a variety of stomach ailments, yihod himem and migaña), Western medicine is believed to offer prognosis equal to that of powerful traditional non-secular therapies, but not necessarily superior to them.

The injectionist's therapy is considered a variety of Western medicine. Injections are provided in the town's single pharmacia and by a handful of free-lance injectionists. All offer the same therapy, injection with what the client believes to be a uniform medicament, generally unidentifiable beyond "merify".[19] Injectionist therapy is favored for primary syphilis (kitin) and "fevers" (weba).

The town herbalist's foremost traditional competitors are the weak debtera and the balazar. The relative concentration of these therapists in towns is indicated by the following: In Tikurmidir and Lemmariet, there

[19] Most often, it is penicillin.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

is better able to obtain new abinet, since his own growing repertoire increases the possibility of arranging abinet exchanges with other debteras. Moreover he is better equiped to utilize them; he has learned much of the Ethiopian herbal pharmacopeia, and is able to identify botanicals by the Ge'ez nomers with which they are frequently designated in the recipes of abinet therapies and kitabs. Similarly, his mastery of Ge'ez makes possible the acquisition of complex digams.

In addition to acquiring individual recipes, debtera-healers also seek out encyclopaedic treatices. These are inventories of recipes, bearing Ge'ez titles such as "book of medicine for diseases for all parts of the body" (metshafe medhaniyt lekwiylown deweyate akalat). In these books, recipes are grouped according to diseases; the diseases are, in turn, classified according to the part of the body that they affect, arranged from head to feet. Stefan Strelcyn (1965), after close examination of four such manuscripts, has commented on the substantial uniformity of their contents and the remarkable similarities which they share with the third and fourth books of Avicenna's Canon of Medicine.

While such treatises contain hundreds of recipes, their significance for the practice of Abyssinian medicine is limited by the character of their pathogenic interests. As seen by his clients, the debtera's thera-